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Advanced College Credit Pathways: Six Undergraduates Reflect on Their Journeys as Writers

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ADVANCED COLLEGE CREDIT PATHWAYS: SIX UNDERGRADUATES
REFLECT ON THEIR JOURNEYS AS WRITERS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction

by

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the writing habits and behaviors of six undergraduate students who earned advanced college credit from the International Baccalaureate diploma, Advanced Placement exam scores, or through dual enrollment partnerships with accredited colleges. Using narrative and case study methods, the study investigated the relationship between high school advanced credit composition courses and the requirements of undergraduate writing. At the time of the study the participants had already completed a minimum of three semesters of study on a college campus. Participants met a total of three times over the course of one semester. In reflecting on their experiences and in sharing their stories, several themes emerged.

Participants report that their advanced credit opportunities offered them advantages over their peers in college in terms of work ethic, knowledge of writing skills, and research practices. They report entering college as confident writers, and they developed a disciplined work ethic before entering college. The findings of this study indicate that the advanced credit opportunities these participants had were largely helpful to their becoming competent college writers. Participants also report their success was due in some way to their strong relationships with writing instructors and mentors. The findings of this study raise further questions regarding the construction of future advanced credit opportunities.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

I have taught high school English for over twenty years. Early in my career, I remember staring wide-eyed at veteran teachers who graded papers during faculty meetings, invented clever nicknames for their students, and scoffed at the latest educational gimmick designed to improve our practice. In those days, fresh out of a masters degree program, I was thrilled to hear the tiny private school where I first taught considering innovations such as moving to a block schedule, cooperative learning, and team teaching. I eagerly pulled from my tiny bag of tricks and stumbled over obstacle after obstacle. Since then, I, too, lug a stack of essays to every faculty meeting, consider creative ways to keep my own class of rowdy seniors seated and productive, and have eschewed many gimmicks in favor of tried-and-true strategies that have expanded my own bag of tricks.

I have learned over the years, as my experienced colleagues already knew, that educational trends come, go, and are recycled and repurposed seemingly with every new freshman class. I think most teachers are reluctant to abandon the knowledge that comes with experience in favor of a new federal policy or state regulation. However, we must bend our knowledge to fit the framework of each new “innovation.” One such trend that has built momentum for most of my educational career is the desire to push more and more students to university study. More students than ever take the ACT, including every single high school junior in Louisiana since 2013. While it’s hard to say whether more students take the ACT because they want to obtain a college degree or whether more students pursue a college degree because they have been encouraged to take the ACT, the fact remains: high school has changed because of the growing trend toward preparing as many students as possible for college enrollment.

Along with the trend of increased interest and enrollment in college, programs designed to prepare students and give them a head start in college have increased as well. In addition to programs such as Advanced Placement (AP) and the International Baccalaureate (IB), which are established programs meant to challenge high-achieving students, dual enrollment has become an accessible, popular entry into college-level work. Unlike AP and IB classes, dual enrollment courses offer students the opportunity to enroll in college courses while still in high school.

As a high school teacher who has experience with AP, IB and dual enrollment, both as a program coordinator and a classroom teacher, I see that these opportunities can be attractive to a wide demographic of students. No longer intended for the most motivated or high-achieving student, dual enrollment programs promise college preparation and most importantly, college credit hours to high school students who qualify for the programs. The school where I currently teach has steadily increased its IB, AP and dual enrollment offerings since 2001, the year we became an authorized IB school. My experience teaching in a school that is committed to providing advanced college credit to students in various forms has changed the way I teach, and it has raised important questions. The purpose of this study is to explore the stories of individual students who have taken advantage of advanced college credit opportunities offered to them. I am interested to learn how college students who earned credit for college writing courses have managed the transition between high school and college. I am interested in learning how students who successfully completed advanced college credit courses in high school made the transition to college, specifically in terms of their writing.

Completing college provides many with future opportunities that are unavailable otherwise. It is no surprise, then, that the journey toward a college education begins early, with the path between high school and college seen as a seamless road toward a bachelor's degree.

The earlier one can begin the journey toward a career path, then, the sooner one can experience the success that comes with completing a college degree. To this end, the idea of early college admission is a popular one, and it is no surprise that many students find the possibility of dual enrollment attractive. Opportunities to earn early college credit vary from Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses to high school students traveling to college campuses to take university-based courses offered by college faculty. Such opportunities allow students to engage with more challenging coursework and to build a college transcript before high school graduation. Earning college credit through dual enrollment often means spending less time in college, and therefore spending less money on college tuition. Dual enrollment, particularly when courses are taught on high school campuses, offers students challenging coursework as well as the affective benefits of learning in a supportive, familiar environment. As dual enrollment opportunities reach more and more students, we may begin to rethink what a successful high school experience and a successful high school student look like. This chapter introduces a research study of undergraduate students who received some type of advanced credit for a freshman-level composition course. In addition, it addresses some of the popular ways students earn advanced college credit and outlines the ways that each path defines success for its program. This study investigates the unique experiences of a small number of students, all of whom can be described as highly motivated and successful. By looking closely at students such as the ones whose stories are recorded here, teachers and policy makers may get a glimpse of what makes a successful advanced credit program. These students attribute at least some of their success in college to habits and relationships they formed in their high school advanced credit classes. Their stories reveal them to be confident, capable writers who have learned valuable skills to become successful writers in and out of the classroom.

A Study of Undergraduate Writers

This study presents the narratives of six undergraduate student writers who entered college with advanced credit for their freshman writing courses. Four of the group members, Liz¹, Molly, Calliope, and Paige, are International Baccalaureate Diploma graduates. London earned advanced credit for her freshman writing composition class through a dual enrollment partnership between her high school and a local four-year university. Lori earned advanced credit for her freshman composition classes through a combination of dual enrollment and Advanced Placement. Three of the participants are liberal arts majors: Liz, London, and Calliope. Molly is an engineering major. Paige and Lori are microbiology majors with plans to attend medical school and dental school, respectively.

The participants provided data for this study in small focus groups, individual interviews, and through writing samples. Though the participants in this study represent five unique college majors and three unique paths of earning advanced credit, their reflections on their experiences overlap in complex, interesting ways (Table, p. 10). In particular, I have woven Liz's story throughout Chapter Four so that she serves as the recursive voice throughout the piece. Liz's description of her writing process and high school experiences provide a metanarrative for making sense of the other participants' experiences. In organizing this chapter around Liz's narrative, I draw on Doll's (2012) work in complexity and chaos theory. He posits that "self-organization . . . is the defining characteristic of all complexity research and study . . . [It] *emerges from* an interactive base of particulars" (p. 170, ital. in original). This chapter does not rely solely on self-organization, but I have tried to maneuver the stories of the participants based

¹ All participants chose a pseudonym for this study.

on their own language and based on the topics that each discussed in their focus groups and interviews with me.

Table. Participants' Academic Pathways

Name	Type of High School	Advanced Credit Path	Type of College	College Major
Calliope	Independent Public	IB Diploma	Private University	Sociology
Liz	Independent Public	IB Diploma	Private Liberal Arts College	Urban Studies/Art
London	Independent Public	DE	Public University	Business/Theater
Lori	Public	AP and DE	Public University	Microbiology
Molly	Independent Public	IB Diploma	Public Technology-Focused University	Industrial Engineering
Paige	Independent Public	IB Diploma	Public University	Microbiology

After our first focus group session, Calliope and I left the meeting room in the university library together. I thanked her for making the one-hour drive from her home to meet with me. She told me she hoped that her story would help my research because when she received my invitation to meet, she thought, “Yes, I’ll be there! All the IB students who got your email said we’d do anything to help Mrs. Robillard graduate!” While I am humbled and grateful for her willingness to participate, Calliope is not the only student who agreed to participate because of a meaningful relationship with a teacher. Lori is a former student of a colleague at a school in a nearby city. She, like Calliope, was eager to help in my research because, as she tells me at the conclusion of one of our interviews, “You’re a friend of Mr. E. I’d do anything to help him out!” Her words echo what Molly reveals in her interviews as well. She says, “I really value close relationships . . . They really come full circle. You just never know when you will see people again” (Personal Interview). Indeed, all the participants in this study represent relationships that

have circled and crisscrossed over the years. The ways in which our stories have spiraled and arced continue to emerge and change with every encounter. Our relationships, like the journeys these students have undertaken in their academic work, are incomplete and complicated. Inquiry into the participants' narratives serves not to provide understanding and clarity, but to complicate and uncover connections, ambiguities and contradictions among individuals.

Inquiry and Discovery

The participants in this study were selected from among a pool of high school graduates at local high schools. Students responded voluntarily to an email survey poll. From the responses, I selected students who were current undergraduates in college; who had completed a minimum of three semesters on a college campus; and who indicated willingness to participate in focus groups and interviews. This study addressed the experience of undergraduate students who completed advanced college credit in high school. Using qualitative methods and drawing on a rich tradition of narrative inquiry for both data collection and reporting, I interviewed six undergraduate students in both focus groups of two and three students and in individual interviews. I met with each participant a total of three times over the course of one semester. Participants were asked to provide and discuss writing samples and were invited to write short biographical introductions for this research project. The project focused on the following research questions:

- How do advanced credit courses in English Language Arts offered in high school, such as International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment prepare students for writing in college?
- How do students experience themselves as writers as they move from high school to college?

A Growing Trend Toward Advanced Credit

Advanced credit is a growing trend among high school students. In the 2016-2017 school year, Advanced Placement exams served 2.7 million students nationwide (The College Board, 2017). In the November 2016 and May 2017 exam sessions, the International Baccalaureate Organization scored over 170, 000 full Diploma Candidates in over 3500 schools internationally (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2017; 2017a). . In Louisiana alone, the State Department of Education estimates that around 23,000 students enrolled in Dual Enrollment credit through state colleges and universities in the 2016-2017 school year (Sentell, 2017). Each of these programs has seen steady increases since its inception. However, there is not a wealth of data to support claims that such programs provide students with the necessary preparation for success in college beyond the earning of credit hours.

The growing popularity of advanced credit opportunities raised questions for me in my own teaching practice. Based on my assumptions that students need time and myriad opportunities to learn to write well, I felt a tension between allowing students to emerge as writers in their own time in high school and the relentless push to encourage as many students as possible to take as many advanced college credit hours as possible. I wondered what the effects of such practices mean for students who find themselves “placing out” of freshmen composition courses and subsequently being asked to write at the same level of competency and sophistication as peers who had a year or more of college study behind them. Drawing on the seminal work of pedagogical scholars Elbow (2000), Graves (1983), and Murray (1985), I sought out ways in which the experience of participants could affirm or challenge the body of knowledge in the field. Elbow (2000) asserts that writers need time to develop their unique voices and authentic audiences to read their work. Graves (1983) and Murray (1985) underscore

the importance of choice in student writing endeavors and the pivotal role that writing communities, including caring teachers, play in developing student writers. Furthermore, I wanted to understand to what extent did the participants in this study experience the kind of pedagogical practice endorsed by scholars in the field of writing research.

Not only did I want to investigate the kind of pedagogical experiences of the students I intended to study, but I acknowledged that awarding students with advanced credit in writing provides its own challenges as well. Since there are no set standards guiding all college freshman composition courses, there is a great degree of variation concerning teacher expectations and workloads. Both the College Board, who manages Advanced Placement, and the International Baccalaureate Organization publish goals, objectives, and grade criteria for its teachers and students. These expectations are standardized across the entire program. (The College Board, 2014; International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013a). However, for students enrolled in Dual Enrollment classes, the expectations and grade criteria can vary from institution to institution and sometimes from instructor to instructor. The learning objectives from the two dual enrollment opportunities represented in this study emphasize technical aspects of writing, such as well-constructed paragraphs and a limited number of grammar and mechanical errors. Both the AP and IB objectives and criteria emphasize assessment of a student's interpretive skills, ability to control an argument, and control of appropriate idiom and register. The technical aspects of writing are embedded in these more sophisticated skills. I have included the grade criteria for the dual enrollment opportunities in which London and Lori participated in APPENDIX I.

I set out to meet with each participant with not only my research questions in mind, but also with an acceptance that our conversations might meander and veer off topic. I allowed the students to tell as much or as little of their stories as possible. I provided follow-up questions that

I hoped would bring depth and possibly some clarity to my interpretation, but at times it was difficult not to lead the participants where I assumed their stories would go. In the data analysis and interpretation of this study, I tried to allow each participant's words to convey their stories wherever possible. I interject my interpretation to make connections among the participants and between the participants' stories and my research questions.

Theoretically, this study is situated in the work of pragmatist philosophers like John Dewey (1938; 1938/1998) and in the post-modern realm of scholars like William Doll (1993, 2012). The methodology for this study came from the work in narrative inquiry done by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Tamboukou (2008). Theory and methodology blur, overlap, and inform each other in my collection and analysis of the data. The boundaries imposed on this study in terms of the selection of participants, the number of participants, the time spent with them, and the means of collecting data from them are arbitrary. Viewing narrative inquiry from a perspective of the pragmatic and the post-modern acknowledges that while all data are emerging and fragmented, it is necessary for the researcher to make difficult choices to manage the study.

The narratives I include in this study, much like the process that each participant describes using to write or to make sense of her life experience, is emergent, recursive, individualized, and messy. Their stories affirm some of my assumptions regarding the ways in which students learn to become confident writers. By situating this study in a pragmatic context, I see writing as a set of learned habits. Writing is not just a creative endeavor. Students learn to write well by practicing their writing with guidance and encouragement from their teachers and from writing for real audiences.

I admit I am encouraged to know that all the participants value their writing. They take pride in it and engage in complicated processes of researching, writing, and rewriting. Other

elements of their narratives challenge what I have understood about good writing. Students report sometimes doing well in writing that happens extemporaneously, with little planning and revision. Almost all of them eschew the importance of peer revision as well. Another surprising finding in this study was the ways participants describe their technical writing as rich, nuanced and meaningful to their identities as writers. My own understanding of what it means to teach writing well continues to emerge as a result of my participation in this study.

Pathways Toward Advanced College Credit

The study I conducted is informed by knowledge of the various advanced credit paths that are available to high school students. There are some institutions that offer specialized programs, such as middle college high schools and early college high schools. Such programs are based in unique partnerships between school districts and particular universities. These schools are often selective in their admissions process to provide access to rigorous coursework to students who may need additional support to prepare for and attend college. Not all students have access to these types of advanced credit programs. Far more popular and available are programs such as Advanced Placement, the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, and dual enrollment or concurrent enrollment partnerships between high schools and either two-year or four-year universities (Allen, 2010).

Advanced Placement

One of the first programs to offer college-level coursework and college credit to high school students is the Advanced Placement (AP) program. Administered by The College Board, Advanced Placement is part of the same organization that manages the SAT, a test for college placement. Advanced Placement offers 38 courses, all of which culminate in an externally scored, summative exam. Scores on this summative exam range from a score of zero to five, with

a score of three considered a passing score. To receive college credit, the minimum score varies. While some universities offer credit for a score of three, many require a four (Bulletin for AP Students and Parents, 2016; Parker et al., 2013).

Advanced Placement classes are high school classes taught by high school faculty. The College Board provides professional development and course resource materials to schools offering AP classes. Additionally, schools must submit their course syllabi to The College Board when they offer new AP classes. The summative assessment for AP classes cost \$93 per exam. Students usually incur this expense individually, though some districts offer financial support. Though any student may take the AP exam, most examinees have completed the coursework that is intended as preparatory for the exam (Bulletin for AP Students and Parents, 2016).

Advanced Placement began in the 1950s and was designed to challenge high-achieving students. Since then, the numbers of students taking AP exams has steadily increased, doubling between 1950 and 1980 and tripling between 1990 and 2000 (Parker et al., 2013; The College Board, 2003). There has been a concerted effort to expand AP course offerings in US schools since 2000. In an effort to bring AP courses to more students, especially low-income students where there were traditionally few AP offerings, the US Department of Education partnered with The College Board to offer exam fee subsidies and professional development for teachers. Though this effort was seen as an attempt to democratize excellence, research indicates that there is wide variation among the quality of AP courses offered in schools (Parker et al., 2013; Morgan and Klaric, 2007; Hansen, 2016; Ackerman, Kanfer, and Calderwood, 2013).

Success in Advanced Placement

Parker et al. (2013) are critical of AP's emphasis on the quantity of information over the depth of understanding of key concepts in a course. Since AP courses culminate in a single,

summative exam, teachers often feel pressure to cover as much content as quickly as possible, sometimes at the expense of students' deep understanding. Parker et al. (2013) report on a case study of students in an AP United States Government class. One group of students participated in a project-based learning assignment. The goal was to introduce and immerse students in key concepts of the course, allowing them to investigate, discuss and think through the concepts over a period of time. A second group in the study was instructed using more traditional methods, namely lectures and readings on course topics. By the time the students took the AP exam, those in the project-based learning group scored higher than their peers. The implication for this study is that just offering AP classes does not mean that students will receive an excellent education—the manner in which these courses are taught makes a difference. Many AP classes are taught as rapid paced survey classes, in which teachers attempt to cover as many topics as possible that might be included on the AP exam. Instead, this research indicates that a project-based model that emphasizes critical thinking and an in-depth study of key topics may lead to greater success on the exam. The authors indicate that rapid expansion of AP classes in recent years has enticed students who were not prepared for the rigor of the course. Moreover, even though professional development is available for teachers, sometimes the teachers do not take advantage of the opportunities or do not invest the large amounts of time required to design lessons that engage students in deep, critical engagement. These results seem to reinforce the conclusions that Hansen (2016) draws.

In a study of an AP expansion program in Kentucky, Hansen (2016) discovers that in spite of efforts to make AP courses accessible to low-income students, the Kentucky initiative, Advance Kentucky, indicates that few students who qualify for the program are actually of low-income status. Hansen (2016) considered enrollment in AP courses, performance on ACT,

immediate enrollment in college, and student persistence for a second year in college as criteria for success in this program. For students who score above three on AP exams, Kentucky provides them and their teachers cash incentives. In spite of such incentives, however, the program showed little improvement in students' ACT scores, one of the measures for admission into Advance Kentucky. In 2008, 20% of students met the benchmark score for admission. This percentage rose to 28% in 2011, and then increased only 1%-2% annually after that. Still, Advance Kentucky encouraged schools to expand their AP offerings, and there were increases in private college admissions, which can be partially attributed to students' success on AP exams. Hansen (2016) reports a slightly negative effect on student persistence in a second year of college. His results indicate that the top quintile of students shows success in the AP exams and in college; those below the top quintile report the lowest rates of college entrance and persistence (p. 21).

It seems that no matter the efforts toward expansion of the AP program, the highest-achieving students see the most success from it. Morgan and Klaric (2007) and Ackerman, Kanfer, and Calderwood (2013) study the college careers of AP graduates. Both studies determine that students who scored well on AP exams (three or higher) fared better than their peers who had not taken AP courses at all. Their results seem to indicate that good performance on the AP exam, not just experience in the course, is the true marker of success for AP students in college. Morgan and Klaric (2007) recommend that more colleges offer advanced credit to AP students scoring a three or higher, as their study shows that course averages for students with AP scores of three or four are comparable. Students who score five on AP exams seem to outperform all their peers. In a similar study involving science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) students at Georgia Tech University, Ackerman, Kanfer, and Calderwood (2013)

indicate that the AP exam score is an accurate predictor of success in college classes; students who scored highly on the AP exam outperformed their peers in relevant college classes. Other studies on college readiness and Advanced Placement opportunities further indicate that while such measures are not perfect, tests such as the AP exam can somewhat indicate a student's future success in college (Maruyama, 2012; Shaw, Marini, and Mattern, 2012).

History and Overview of the International Baccalaureate Organization

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IB) began in the 1960s as an alternative to popular educational trends. As educational practices moved toward positivist, didactic models that emphasized norm-referenced tests, privileged (perceived) innate intelligence, and insisted on uniformity in curricular content, the IB offered something different. Since its inception, IB has drawn on the work of educational theorists John Dewey, A. S. Neill, Jean Piaget, and Jerome Bruner, all of whom favor constructivist models of education that put children's interests and curiosity at the center of instruction. The IB philosophy depends upon transdisciplinary learning, criterion-referenced assessments, and a focus on critical analysis to develop skills and content based at least somewhat on student choice. The IB mission statement further articulates the philosophy of the program. It "aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect" (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2018a). The mission statement underscores the International Baccalaureate's desire to educate the whole child, "[encouraging] students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right" (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2018a). The holistic nature of the IB program sets it apart from other advanced

credit programs. Though students may pick selected IB courses, they are encouraged to pursue the full Diploma Program, which emphasizes the holistic nature of the IB philosophy.

As of 2014, the IB reports 1,250,000 students in its senior program (for eleventh and twelfth grade students), 135,849 of whom are candidates for the full IB Diploma. Worldwide, 4000 schools offer the IB Diploma. As the original IB Diploma program has grown, the IB Organization has expanded to meet the needs of its holistic mission. Currently, there are three IB programs in addition to the Diploma Program: the Primary Years Program, which serves students from age 5 to age 11, the Middle Years Program, which serves students from age 12 to age 15, and the Career Program, which is an alternative to the Diploma Program and focus on career-readiness for students who may or may not enter a university setting after high school graduation. Though these programs complement each other, they are independent programs: schools may offer one, two, or all, depending on the needs of the students.

The most rigorous articulation of the IB program is its Diploma Program (DP). The DP is a two-year, comprehensive curriculum in which students complete coursework in six subject areas (Language/Literature, Mathematics, Science, Individuals and Societies, Fine Arts, World Languages). In addition, students write an independent research paper, the Extended Essay, study metacognition and philosophy in Theory of Knowledge (ToK), and design activities and serve their communities through their Creativity Activity Service (CAS) projects. Students must meet minimum requirements in each of the components to earn the IB diploma. Not only do the IB requirements reward a variety of accomplishments, but each of the academic subjects require students to perform well on multiple assessments. This model is different, for example, from programs like Advanced Placement, in which students must score well only on one assessment. Students who receive the IB Diploma must participate in all required components, including a

minimum number of contact hours in their academic subjects. To achieve the IB Diploma, students must score a total of 24 points. A maximum of seven points is awarded in each of the six subject areas, and students have the opportunity to earn bonus points toward their diploma for excellent execution of their ToK assessments and their Extended Essays. Courses in the IB program are offered at two levels: Standard and Higher. Diploma candidates take a combination of Standard and Higher level courses; students who choose individual courses may select either level. Many schools that offer the IB program provide the incentive of weighted grade point averages. The IB diploma is an attractive attribute for many students' college applications, but colleges that award credit for individual IB courses typically do so for achievement in higher level courses only, as these are seen as providing students with challenging, college-level content, pacing and assessment (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2018. 2017b,).

Success in the IB Diploma Program

Conley et al. (2014) note “while several IB/Honors students mentioned the benefit of receiving college credit for IB tests, they did not perceive this as the most important or valuable aspect of the IB Diploma program” (p. 18). In fact, IB students cited the “holistic” nature of the program as an asset to “develop strong learners,” while they viewed AP courses as a path toward obtaining college credit (Conley et al. 2014, p. 19). In fact, much of the body of research on the benefits of an IB diploma cite the habits and behaviors acquired by IB students as just as important or more important as the opportunity to earn advanced college credit, though these traits seem to be incidental in many research studies. (Conley et al., 2014; Culross and Tarver, 2011; Shaunessy-Dedrick et al., 2014).

The IB Diploma Program, organized around a core of theory of knowledge, community service and independent research, relies on a set of affective attributes called the Learner Profile

(International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013). This series of traits, when nurtured and practiced, become skills and behaviors that seem to help IB Diploma students succeed in their postsecondary academic endeavors (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2015). The Learner Profile lists attributes that require independent, critical thought, appropriate risk taking, and the ability to communicate and seek answers effectively (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013). Students practice these traits through the lenses of the IB's Approaches to Teaching and Learning, a set of pedagogical practices that foster inquiry, collaboration and connection among complex subjects (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2015). Although the research on successful habits and behaviors of high-achieving students (Shaunessy-Dedrick et al., 2014) and the research on the academic benefits of rigorous programs like the Diploma Program (Conley et al., 2014) do not address the attributes of the learner profile directly, the evidence indicates that successful students do in fact internalize and value these attributes.

Beckwitt, Van Camp, and Carter (2015) studied district-wide implementation of the IB program. Though these authors do not address the IB Learner Profile directly in the study, the data they collect regarding student perceptions and behaviors indicate that the traits of the learner profile affect student success positively. For example, the authors note that the longer students stay in the IB program, the higher their measures for open-mindedness, multicultural knowledge, and self-efficacy, as reported by students through survey data and via psychosocial assessment instruments (Beckwitt, Van Camp, and Carter, 2015). Furthermore, the number of classes an IB student takes is positively correlated with the aforementioned behaviors (Beckwitt, Van Camp, and Carter, 2015). Likewise, students who are high-achieving often are able to see past high test scores and grade point averages to “make more informed decisions about university . . . choices” that reflect their unique set of talents and abilities (Wilson and Adelson, 2012, p. 34). The IB

program provides the opportunity for students to excel academically, and that effort must be met with personal characteristics that support the rigor and risk taking of difficult intellectual work (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013).

The Trend Toward Dual Enrollment

Though Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs continue to grow in popularity, dual enrollment programs have become increasingly more available to students in the last 25 years. The most prominent benefits of advanced credit are often financial, as credit earned through DE programs often cost less than similar classes offered on college campuses. In fact, some DE programs are offered at no cost to public high school students (Allen, 2010; Morgan and Klaric, 2007). Offering college classes to high school students also provides incentive for students to stay in school and maintain focused attention on their academic classes, thereby remedying “senioritis” (An, 2013). Furthermore, more credits earned in high school equates to fewer required courses taken on university campuses (Conley et al., 2014). For students, this benefit means less money required for living expenses, and for many students, the opportunity to use financial aid, such as state-funded benefits for graduate work beyond the bachelor’s degree. Such tangible benefits are worth the hours and effort spent on DE work for many students. Still, as educators we must consider our responsibility to provide students with quality educational opportunities, not just cost-effective expediency. In that regard, we must look past the financial benefits to see how DE programs may benefit students beyond college admission.

Of the universities offering DE partnerships, 85% had high school students enrolled as dual enrollment and 55% had high school students enrolled in regular college classes. This statistic includes 98% of all two-year institutions (Allen, 2010). One of the most interesting

trends regarding dual enrollment is the way the programs have expanded. Historically, dual enrollment programs trace back to the 1990s as a means for highly capable students to accelerate their studies while in high school. Now, dual enrollment programs are not limited to high-achieving students; in fact, many dual enrollment programs are geared specifically to students at risk of dropping out of high school, students who would be the first generation in their families to graduate college, or students who come from low socio-economic groups.

In a quantitative study of Florida high school students' taking rigorous high school courses, including dual enrollment, Long, Conger and Iatorola (2012) "suggest that requiring or encouraging students to enroll in even one rigorous course in their first two years of school can substantially improve graduation and four-year college enrollment rates" (p. 315). Many studies on dual enrollment programs concur. Students who participate in dual enrollment programs in high school have higher grade point averages their first year in college, are more likely to continue college a second year, and are more likely to graduate with a bachelors degree (Allen, 2010; An, 2013; Camp and Walters, 2016; U.S. Department of Education, 2017).

In a comprehensive study of dual enrollment opportunities, Allen (2010) finds that 57% of all postsecondary institutions have some kind of dual enrollment partnership. This study defines dual enrollment (DE) as programs that offer high school students the opportunity to take a college class and earn college credit while still in high school. Most DE programs involve partnerships between high schools and two-year colleges or universities. The partnership allows for sharing of course information, such as syllabi, textbooks, and sometimes resources such as laboratory facilities or libraries. Though there are variations, often DE courses are taught by high school teachers with graduate degrees in their academic subject or are taught by high school

teachers who are supervised by university faculty (Adelman, 2006; Giani, Alexander, and Reyes, 2014).

A Unique Dual Enrollment Opportunity

Dual enrollment programs such as the early college high school (ECHS), a model funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation, specifically attracts students who are not necessarily high achieving. ECHS programs are designed to attract and support students who have financial need, who are in danger of dropping out of traditional high schools, and who may be the first generation in their families to go to college. Early college high schools are a unique DE experience, as they are high school campuses that are partnered with universities and intended to offer specific populations the support and scaffolding needed to succeed in college. While there is much research done in this area, and while this type of environment offers a unique perspective into college preparation and success, these early college high schools are not the usual DE path for most students. No matter the success of these programs, most high school students either do not qualify for ECHS or do not live in an area where an ECHS is available (Woodcock and Olsen-Beal, 2013; Webb and Gerwin, 2014).

Most DE programs involve college-level classes being taught on a high school campus. The instructors for these classes can be high school teachers who have graduate degrees and who work under the supervision of university academic departments. There is wide variation in how these programs are administered. Some university departments are quite involved, offering tutoring, library, and other services to high school students, while other programs are much more isolated, with instructors using college syllabi to teach the classes without much intervention from the universities at all (Woodcock and Olsen-Beal, 2013; Webb and Gerwin, 2014).

Success in Dual Enrollment

Initially, advanced academic work seems promising: students enter college study not only prepared for the work they will encounter but also confident of their ability to succeed because of their experience with college-level work. The U.S. Department of Education (2017) estimates that nearly two million students were enrolled in some kind of DE program in 2011. This study indicates that dual enrollment programs allow students a statistically significant positive effect on attaining college degrees. Other research indicates that DE students have statistically significantly higher college grade point averages than their non-DE peers and that they are more likely to persist for a second year in college (Berger et al., 2014; Giani, Alexander, and Reyes, 2014; An and Taylor, 2015). Allen (2010) indicates that DE students are 12% more likely than non-DE high school graduates to enter college immediately after high school graduation, and they have a 16-20% better chance of earning a bachelors degree than non-DE college students. Dual enrollment programs are a way to ensure that students will be well on their way to earning those 20 credit hours.

While much of the news regarding dual enrollment for college credit is positive, researchers have considered that not all DE programs are equal. There is evidence, for example that success in DE courses in core academic subjects are a better indicator for success in college (Giani, Alexander, and Reyes, 2014) and that students who take more DE credit hours fare better than students who take fewer DE classes (Adelman, 2006). In fact, Adelman (2006) suggests that students who earn at least 20 hours of college credit by the end of their freshman year in college are 28% more likely to return for a second year of college and therefore are more likely to reap the best benefits from their work: an a bachelors degree.

The numbers show that DE programs help students succeed, at least initially in college. But many researchers and educators express concern over the growing trend of beginning college work in high school and accelerating students toward a college degree. In terms of DE program themselves, Allen (2010) summarizes many concerns such as inconsistencies among DE programs, limited oversight by universities, and a potential lack of rigor in the DE courses themselves. It is also worth noting that as high school students earn DE college credit, many of them bypass traditional freshman courses. There are, then, young students on college campuses, and these young students must grapple with difficult course work while learning to navigate the world of the college campus. Some suggest that universities consider multiple measures of college readiness, not just ACT score or DE participation when admitting students. Looking at a student's full breadth of academic experience, rather than just quantifiable measures of achievement may be a better gauge of college readiness, in other words (Allen, 2010; Giani, Alexander, and Reyes, 2014; Maruyama, 2012). Furthermore, research on DE partnerships indicates that close communication and collaboration between high school and university faculties are indicators of successful programs. Researchers recommend that faculties on both campuses rely on each other to strengthen their DE programs, though the collaborative component is often lacking in consistency (Camp and Walters, 2016).

Limitations of Dual Enrollment Writing Courses

Though many extol the financial and pragmatic benefits of dual enrollment programs, others caution educators from being too enthusiastic about advanced college credit. The caution arises primarily in discussions of student habits and student writing skills. These warnings should be considered carefully, as both student behavior and student writing prowess are markers of success within and beyond college life. Tinberg and Nadeau (2011) address the complicated

issue of success within the context of dual enrollment. They contend though dual enrollment programs encourage some students to pursue further college study, “such programs have not been proven to enhance student learning. Indeed, studies on the academic performance of high school students in dual-enrollment programs have begun to raise alarm, both as to students’ readiness to benefit in the college classroom and to the lack of consistent oversight given to the curriculum to which these students are exposed” (p. 706). The authors do not detail what such “consistent oversight” might mean, and it could be argued that even more standardization and implementation of prescriptive curricula could create a broad system of college readiness. However, this assumption is not supported by the research into either dual enrollment programs or college-level writing.

In fact, Yancey and Morrison (2011) advocate for just the opposite: an approach to writing instruction that is individualized and tailored for specific students. They contend that “any standardization of [college] freshman writing . . . amounts to an unsuitable ‘commodification’ of writing itself. Writing then becomes reduced to a mere set of skills and disassociated from its subject and from the context—notably, the classroom, the faculty, and the assignment that the faculty generate” (qtd. in Tinberg and Nadeau, 2011, p. 711). Yancey and Morrison (2011) specifically consider the success of dual enrollment writing programs. They argue that in spite of perceived benefits of dual enrollment writing classes, there is no real way to achieve college-level writing instruction in a high school classroom. Even if students are academically prepared to do the work of a college writing class, Yancey and Morrison’s research shows that “students will face the rigor of college-level work but acknowledge that dual enrollment courses are modified college courses, adapted for high school students” (qtd. in Tinberg and Nadeau, 2011, p. 716). In other words, if high school teachers teach college-level

writing courses on a high school campus, there is no way to ensure that the level of instruction and the level of student writing is consistent with their freshman peers on the college campus. Yancey and Morrison (2011) call for a different kind of oversight of these writing programs, one that involves “stakeholders with expertise in writing instruction and with the range of developmental abilities involved” (qtd. in Tinberg and Nadeau, 2011, p. 717). For these researchers, the missing component is a human one, one that engages faculty at both the high school and college level in meaningful communication and collaboration on strategies and expectations of the college writing course.

Research in Dual Enrollment Programs and Writing Instruction

In an autobiographical research report, Lukes (2014), describes similar findings regarding the benefits of good relationships between high school and college faculties wishing to implement dual enrollment programs. Her work is a narrative of her own experience in creating a dual enrollment science course. Lukes’ (2014) work, though unique to her own experience, offers valuable advice and cautions for teachers interested in creating dual enrollment partnerships with colleges and universities. She outlines practical matters, such as administrative approval and documentation of teacher qualifications and the quality of materials and course content, but she contends “professional networks and relationships make the process smoother” (p. 21). In citing her own rapport with both her students and university leaders, Lukes (2014) acknowledges that every situation is unique. From a qualitative research standpoint, it is interesting to discover the nuance of individual situations and relationships between teachers, students, and course content. However, in developing quality dual enrollment writing programs, or any dual enrollment programs, really, the lack of standard procedures or expected outcomes can be seen as a limitation of the model.

In a study of a small group of college professors from a range of academic departments, Brockman et al. (2011) indicate that college-level writing differs greatly from typical high school-level assignments not only in the mode of discourse assigned, but also the expectations of complexity involving research and citation skills. According to the study participants, “students would benefit from recognizing the varying range of necessary skills associated with managing source materials, with special emphasis given to the more complex skills” (p. 78). Guzy (2011) reiterates the need for research and time management skills as necessary for student success.

In addition, Guzy (2011) is critical of advanced credit programs and claims that many provide students with a false sense of superiority when they enter college. She cites the lack of variety in high school writing assignments and the weaknesses in student writing skills, notably grammar and mechanical conventions, as evidence that students should not be so eager to jettison past freshman English classes. Specifically, Guzy (2011) cautions that students who have been successful in rigorous programs such as Advanced Placement often perceive their writing to be better than it is and therefore “resist more challenging college-level instruction and constructive criticism inconsistent with the successes they [achieved] in AP” (p. 67). Ultimately, Guzy (2011) makes the case that introductory courses, such as freshman composition, provide students with “valuable time and experiences [they] need to develop into . . . effective, mature writer[s] and researcher[s]” (p. 69). Studies such as these indicate that advanced credit programs must look forward to the skills and behaviors that will make students successful beyond their freshman year in college.

The anecdotal evidence in studies such as Brockman et al. (2011) and in small-scale studies such as Guzy (2011) supports Tinberg and Nadeau’s (2011) assertion that policies which transition students from high school to college must “[promote] not only student persistence in

college but enhanced student literacies” (p. 706). Indeed, one of the observations noted by Tinberg and Nadeau (2011) is that “the more successful programs take students’ developmental needs into consideration, helping dual-enrolled students work toward college-level expectations gradually” (p. 716). An ongoing discussion in the literature concerning dual enrollment is the conflict between providing high school students developmentally and experientially appropriate coursework while maintaining the challenging standards of college classes. Accelerating students quickly through material does not seem to be the best course of action for adolescents. From the perspective of college instructors, traditional high school students do not enter college work prepared for the complexity of college-level writing. On the other hand, dual enrollment programs attempt to push high school students toward college level writing quickly, seemingly at the risk of spending necessary time attending to the needs of still-developing adolescent writers. Further research to open discussions and develop guidelines for the types of writing that would simultaneously offer developmentally appropriate curriculum and challenging coursework beyond traditional high school expectations is needed in this area.

One of the concerns that has not been fully addressed by research into dual enrollment programs is the social aspect of learning and writing. Questions concerning the benefits of offering college-level writing to high school students have been explored in a body of qualitative studies (Budden et al., 2002; Alsup and Bernard-Donals 2002; Strachan, 2002). These studies focus on student learning and the means by which students learn to be competent writers and ethical thinkers. Strachan (2002) notes that high school writing teachers are most concerned with rules of grammar and organizational structures, while college instructors prefer students to critically engage with concepts. Alsup and Bernard-Donals (2002) note that successful writing classes must involve ethical practices. In other words, being able to write an argument means

that students “know how [their] fellows may arrive at the same, or a very different, position” and that they must adopt an “ethical orientation toward others” (p. 121). Approaching writing as inquiry and building knowledge in a constructivist manner requires maturity and respect among students. Perhaps not all students who qualify for dual enrollment writing courses are ready to demonstrate such sophisticated behaviors.

Kapanke and Westemier (2002) also note the differences between high school and college writers. They conclude, as do Budden et al. (2002), that writing instruction must be individualized. Teachers who know their subject matter and their students well can offer rich, challenging curricula that meet the standards of both high school and dual enrollment programs. Fukuda and Hopper-Moore (2016) studied the differences in instruction and performance between high school DE students and college students in an introductory writing class. Their study included implementing the same writing task to the two groups. As part of the planning and teaching of the lesson, teachers of both the high school and college students met to share insights from their experience. The most important finding of this study is how beneficial the collaboration among the teachers was. The participants had the chance to talk about their students, their concerns about course materials, and their views of teaching freshman-level writing. Studies about bridging the gap between high school and college-level writing offer possibilities for future studies.

The chapter that follows situates this study in the theoretical realm of pragmatism. Drawing largely on the work of John Dewey (1938; 1986/1938; 1998/1938), I assert that writing instruction depends on the action of writing. In other words, writing is a collection of learned habits that can be refined and used in various combinations for any number of purposes. My understanding of writing instruction has been shaped by researchers such as Donald Graves

(1983), Donald Murray (1985), and Peter Elbow (1973), who define and practice the kinds of behaviors that elicit good writing from students.

Chapter Three provides a framework for the methodology of the study. This study focuses on the lived experiences of six undergraduate students. My collection and interpretation of the narratives of these students is informed by the work of Clandinin and Connelly (2000), Riessman (2008). Rather than looking for pre-determined themes in their narratives, I have attempted to let the students' narratives speak for themselves. I have drawn themes and interpretations of my own based in their words. Though my research questions and methods have undoubtedly influenced the narratives the participants provided me, I have tried to offer interpretations of their narratives based largely on the language and artifacts the participants provided. The lived experiences of the students and the theoretical foundations of the study work together to inform each other in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four offers the findings of the research study. In meeting with the six participants and in collecting artifacts of their writing, I reflected on the common themes in many of their stories. Even in individual interviews, participants recalled similar habits and experiences in their writing lives. For this reason, I chose to weave their narratives together in a single chapter. The narratives of the participants are simultaneously individual stories of experiences and part of a larger community of young writers. Though they do not write together or meet as a single group as part of this study, their stories overlap in interesting ways. Each story allowed me to interpret similar themes from multiple perspectives. By looking at the ways individuals recall similar experiences, it is possible to see how writing instruction can be made personal, even in a large classroom setting.

The final chapter provides my reflection as a researcher and teacher. The student participants offer valuable insights for future studies and for classroom instruction. In the conclusion, I also consider the implications of programs such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual enrollment.

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Several years ago, I had the opportunity to hear renowned author and educator Janet Allen speak to a group of teachers. When asked about finding the balance between offering students plenty of opportunities to practice their writing and providing meaningful feedback and timely evaluation and assessment of that writing, Allen's message resonates. To paraphrase, she said that if we have the time to read and evaluate everything our students write, they are not writing enough. In one seemingly glib response, Allen seemed to encapsulate prevailing theories of writing instruction and the difficulty of putting those theories into practice.

Writing instruction and learning are pragmatic acts in the truest, most simple sense of the term. Writers write. One cannot provide didactic instruction on writing, nor can one successfully quantify what makes a good piece of writing. Donald Murray (1985) defines writing as a craft, a skill that can be taught and must be practiced. Viewing writing as a skill does not diminish the difficulty of teaching it, though. Murray (1985) contends "skill teaching . . . demands a much more sophisticated, complex form of teaching than the normal I-teach-you-listen university pattern" (p. 137). Good writing is nuanced, personal, and unique to a particular situation, audience and purpose. Helping students learn to navigate myriad ways to use language both in and out of school requires a fundamental understanding and belief in pragmatic theory. There are other approaches, of course. Some researchers in the area of teaching writing rely on Vygotsky's social learning theory, and there are elements of constructivist pedagogy in many popular texts written by and for practitioners. In this chapter, I frame the context of teaching writing to high school students as rooted in pragmatism. Specifically, the theories of John Dewey (1938/1986) guide and inform the teaching of writing.

Many agree that students learn best by doing, and students create ever-changing knowledge based on experience. Moreover, theorists and practitioner/researchers agree that successful writing instruction depends on three essential criteria: providing students choice, offering opportunities for continual practice, and committing to building and nurturing a trusting, compassionate community of learners. This chapter describes one way to look at the theory that underpins much research on writing instruction. Drawing on the work of John Dewey (1938/1998; 1938/1986), I connect pragmatism to practical writing instruction. Researchers such as Peter Elbow (1973; 2000a; 2000b), Donald Graves (1983), and Donald Murray (1985), seem to occupy a space between theory and practice. These practitioner/researchers draw on classroom teaching and research on students to generalize theoretical concepts from practice. Practitioners who draw on their own classroom practice such as Janet Allen (1995), Linda Reif (1992), Nancie Atwell (2002), Peter Smagorinsky (2008), and Jim Burke (2003) are not as concerned with articulating a unique theory of writing instruction. Rather, they offer narratives of classroom experience and share ways to elicit meaningful writing from their students. Their resources are useful for teachers who want to improve their own instructional practice and to encourage their students to explore and practice writing for meaning and understanding.

Pragmatism as Educational Philosophy

In *Pragmatism* (1906), William James asserts that an individual must look for knowledge not in his or her imagination, but through his or her experience—through his or her means of making sense of the physical world. In this manner, pragmatism is dependent on the individual's desire to construct meaning and his or her interpretation of experience as a means to answer philosophical, intellectual and practical problems. In addition, James sees that the individual does not act alone. Since experience of the outside world inevitably includes relationships with

both other people and physical objects, pragmatism must allow in some way for the social construction of knowledge.

Pragmatism, then, becomes almost the ultimate means of making sense of experience and an individual's place in it. It discounts no theory and no method of inquiry, allowing for any means necessary to create an interpretation of experience that is relevant in the real world. It does not insist on any dogma, and it respects any data that are useful in understanding both a present problem and a future solution. At its center, pragmatism is forward-thinking and dynamic.

John Dewey (1938/1986) revises James' notion of pragmatism even further. Like James, Dewey sees knowledge as a social construct in a world that constantly changes and adapts. In that model, individuals must participate in the creation of their societies. We do not simply respond to our environments; we plan, create, strive and struggle to make sense of the world and to attain our place in it. It is our actions, then, which create habits and behaviors that allow us to create thought. The individual's mind is not separate from his or her action; instead, it is an integral function of the evolutionary process of him or herself and society (Tomlinson, 1997). In Dewey's (1938/1986; 1938/1998) ontology, individuals are invested in society and therefore must participate in the creation and understanding of it. Society must be viewed holistically; there is no separating the individual from his community. As such, research conducted on an individual has an effect on society, and research conducted on a society affects the individual. Dewey uses pragmatic theory to conduct research that has the potential to examine social problems, understand them, and ultimately change them (Tomlinson, 1997). For Dewey, knowing is doing. Experience in the world *is* our knowledge of it. His philosophy of pragmatism, then, is transactional realism. Knowledge without practical implication is not

knowledge. We must seek knowledge *of something*. Even when Dewey recognizes structure and order, it is always the structure *of something*. Research (and even reflection and reaction to that research) then, is always a means of transforming the world (Garrison, 1994). There should be no separation of the individual from society, personal experience or his or her understanding of the real world; these are all connected. In order to create society or enact social change, the scientific method should be employed holistically. The method of acquiring knowledge is connected to the process of acquiring it. Scientific method is a process of active participation that mirrors our natural problem solving. Much of experience is gathered through trial and error data; the scientific method formalizes this process and allows the researcher to imagine possible hypotheses in real world scenarios to ease the tension between individuals and their society (Biesta, 2007).

In a critique of traditional educational methods, Dewey (1938/1998) urges his reader not to assume that experience-based education has no structure or guidance. Rather, he reminds the reader that “the belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative . . . any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience” (p. 13). Here, Dewey (1938/1998) asserts that it is up to educators to guide student experience in a way that will lead to their education: “no experience is educative that does not tend both to knowledge of more facts and entertaining of more ideas and to a better, more orderly arrangement of them” (p. 102). Teachers cannot predict the future, but what we do know is that the past, present, and future are connected and interdependent. It is our responsibility to consider well the ways in which we guide the present moments with our students. We must afford them rich opportunities to develop in ways that we believe will support future success. This does not mean that we must look at a

student's education and life as strictly linear or that educational decisions must be reduced to positivist, cause/effect relations. Instead, we have to imagine a future just beyond the horizon of the present. We use our own understanding of the connection between past and present and our own wisdom of experience to guide and nurture our students. Donald Murray (1985) builds on the idea of a teacher's experience as a guide to develop young writers.

Opportunities for Continual Practice

Donald Murray (1985), an early proponent of teaching writing as a process, asserts "writing is a craft before it is an art" (p. 4). He advocates a departure from traditional writing instruction that assumes "students need to learn the parts so they can eventually construct a meaningful whole . . . Non-traditional composition teaching usually reverses the process and emphasizes personal context and personal voice first, working backwards from global concerns to the particulars of language and manuscript presentation" (p. 4). Here, the teacher focuses a student's attention to making meaning through language first, with guidance toward the mechanics of writing later in the process. Though Murray's words are over 30 years old, and though much contemporary literature on writing instruction (Reif, 1992; Gallagher (2011), Burke (2003), Bomer (2016) acknowledges the importance of non-traditional compositions, a great deal of writing instruction can still be considered traditional. Students are held accountable on standardized tests for recalling discrete grammar and mechanical rules. Moreover, some standardized tests, such as the ACT and the Louisiana End of Course tests in English assess the required composition using a computer. Computer assessment of writing almost always relies on writing that is technically strong; the content can be gibberish as long as key words are included. Students can be taught to outsmart a computer algorithm, but the results can hardly be called

good writing. For teachers interested in eliciting good writing from their students, Murray (1985) suggests adopting a responsive teaching model.

Responsive teaching requires teachers to accept students where they are in terms of ability, enthusiasm and capability in writing. From there, teachers offer writing prompts, literature and time to encourage students to play with language and to practice writing. Peter Elbow (1973) has written extensively on freewriting and asserts that offering students many unstructured, ungraded attempts to practice writing is a good way to nurture student growth. In responsive teaching, teachers “cannot just prepare [themselves] and walk in and command the classroom . . . [They] must be able to listen to what is being said in the writing and about the writing . . . And hardest of all, [they] must learn how to shut up, to wait, to listen, to let [their] students teach themselves, for through that teaching [students] will learn the most” (Murray, 1985, p. 144). Murray (1985) draws on Elbow’s (1973, 2000a) model of unstructured, continual practice. Because so much of the work is student-centered and unpredictable, this kind of teaching can be intimidating. Moreover, some are reluctant to trust their own prowess as writers and their own expertise in guiding novice writers. In spite of the difficulties, though, writing educators agree that providing students with time and practice are invaluable strategies for generating meaningful student writing.

Like many, Donald Graves (1983) asserts that writing is revision. Not only is revision a necessary component of the writing process, it is the essential component. However, “revision, or reseeing, is not necessarily a natural act. It draws on a different source of energy, the energy of *anticipation*” (p. 160, ital. in original). When students participate in the cycle of drafting, sharing a draft, receiving feedback, and revising the writing because of that feedback, they can anticipate what their work might look like in finished form. Sharing drafts allows students to see

possibility. In the space between the attempts made on the draft and the sharing of it, students form connections between their words and an audience. Thoughtful feedback is necessary to revision, to reseeing the words on the page. Students “know what comes through so that they might anticipate self-satisfaction and the *vision* of this imprint of their information on classmates or the vision of their work in published form. It is the forward *vision*, as well as the backward vision, that ultimately lead to major breakthroughs in a child’s writing” (p. 160). Here, Graves (1983) indicates that revision can only be accomplished in a community; student writers rely on the relationships they have built with their teacher and peers to help realize their vision and possibility in their writing.

Building and Nurturing a Writing Community

Building a Community of Learners

Not only is community necessary in helping student writers to improve their writing, but also writing for an audience of actual readers is crucial to developing writers. Many school writing assignments are often seen as artificial, as their intention is only to offer a simulation of real-world writing. Students know that the only person who will ever read their writing is their teacher, and often teachers read student work for the sole purpose of evaluating it. The result is that the feedback we often offer students contains only judgment of their weaknesses and (often only grammatical or mechanical) errors. In the absence of a classroom context that values recursive, continual practice in which students continually search for a unique voice and refine their writing through multiple drafts, such evaluation can be devastating to student writers. Moreover, in a classroom context in which students write alone, with no one to try their ideas on and with no one to offer substantive comments before a piece is graded, we lose sight of some of the key purposes of writing at all: communication with others and understanding of complex

concepts. Writers need an audience. Therefore, teachers must work to establish strong, collaborative communities of writers and readers of student writing.

Peter Elbow (2000a) suggests that writers need a community of several types of readers: authority, peers, allies, and self. In addition, these readers are responsible for three types of reading: sharing with no response, response with no criticism or judgment, and criticism and evaluation. Elbow (2000a) imagines the path of becoming writers and readers as a map. He asserts “writing prospers most when we have the richest range of experiences with audience and response—when we are well traveled on the map and often visit the many sites where writing goes on” (p. 29-30). Just as students must recursively practice all stages of the writing process from idea to revision to publication, so must they practice being readers who offer various kinds of response to writers.

Successful Peer Reading and Responding

The practices of recursion and participating in response meld together as students refine and revise their drafts. Murray (1985) observes that as writers revise, their focus moves from big ideas, such as subject matter to the details. This shift in focus from topic to style “parallels an increasing attention to audience. In the early drafts, the writer is his own reader, but as the draft evolves, the writer stands back to see how it will communicate to the reader” (p. 57). Having an audience of readers interested in listening to or responding to a piece of writing, rather than critiquing it supports the writer’s process. Elbow (2000a) values non-evaluative response—merely attentively listening to a writer—as a way to “show writers they have been heard and understood . . . Being understood makes us want to take the trouble to try to articulate more of what is on our minds—and almost on our minds” (p. 32). For Elbow (2000) and Murray (1985), we must be attentive to the emerging, fragmented, every-changing nature of writing. Students

who are novices at writing need support and opportunities to let their writing grow and change so that the published piece is meaningful and honest.

Peers can be a vital component of the writing process by being sometimes non-evaluative and sometimes non-critical. In fact, Elbow (2000a) claims that non-evaluative responses help both the writer and the reader in crafting writing. He asserts “mere sharing may produce more improvement with less effort and discomfort than any other activity” (34). By sharing and just listening to each other students can try out their ideas on an audience and hear when ideas work and when the ideas become tangential or boring. This practice is “the most efficient teaching we can do: it’s all learning and no teaching” (p. 34). Encouraging students to listen to each other’s writing and respond only with “thank you” can be difficult, though. This model takes time and patience, but it allows students to freely rehearse their writing without judgment and can encourage students to take more risks and experiment with richer ideas in their writing.

If students do offer response to their peers’ writing, Elbow (2000a) and Newkirk (1984) encourage teachers to show students how to respond as readers, not graders. Peer readers and teacher readers read papers with entirely different expectations and purposes. Newkirk observes that student readers are more likely to favor papers in which they liked the topic or could in some way relate to the writer’s perspective. Teachers, on the other hand, read papers with evaluative judgment in mind, looking for ways in which the writer met specific instructional expectations according to criteria given. The findings of this small study indicate some limitations for the benefits of peer readers. If instructors intend to use peer readers as a way of providing valuable feedback to student writers, and if that feedback is intended to help writers improve their work, then instructors need to be clear about what they are asking peer readers to do. Instructors may give peer readers direction regarding what to look for in their reading of peers’ work, but

Newkirk's (1984) study indicates that peer readers do not naturally read the same way their teachers do. Both groups of readers in this study read the sample papers quite differently; the groups did not rank the papers the same. Teachers ask students to read each other's work and provide feedback in advance of grading. This act becomes problematic when we consider that students and teachers read the papers differently. Not only does the difference between student readers and teacher readers speak to the conflict of expectations between the two, but it also indicates a problem with asking students to write for a particular audience. If we ask students to write for an audience, then we must accept the judgment and appreciation of that audience. There's no way for a teacher to know, according to Newkirk (1984), what might resonate with an authentic audience. We ask students to write for an authentic audience then grade their papers as English teachers. Such a discrepancy between what we say we want students to do and the way we actually evaluate their work "will only heighten the cynicism that many students have about evaluation" (p. 309).

Newkirk (1984) does not imply that we should eliminate peer readers from our classroom practice. Instead, he suggests that teachers shift their expectations for student readers. Students "might more profitably be viewed as apprentices, attempting to learn and apply criteria appropriate to an academic audience" (p. 310). Teachers, then, must ensure that they instruct both student writers and peer readers how to read and respond using the criteria and expectations the teacher has. Such a role for students complicates the notions of peer reader and authentic audience. If the ultimate goal is for students to write for a teacher who will evaluate the writing and assign a grade, then they must be able to participate meaningfully in the process of improving a paper for evaluation. Perhaps, though, in addition to showing students how to read and write for an academic audience, we, too, can shift our expectations regarding writing. It

could be possible to expand our idea of what actual authentic audiences can provide in terms of feedback to our students. All writing, in other words, does not have to be academic writing.

Students need to be taught to listen appreciatively without judgment, as such behavior is not always nurtured in the classroom. Such skills can only be taught through time and continuous modeling. Students are often reluctant to write, to share writing and to offer feedback. They are equally reluctant to write, to rewrite, to rethink. Providing numerous, low-stakes opportunities to generate writing and to share writing, students become better at it.

Teacher's role and responsibility in the process

Just as peers can be valuable readers of student writing, so can teachers, if they are able to suspend evaluative judgments at the early stages of the writing process. Both Smagorinsky (2008) and Elbow (2000a) agree that though the teacher's voice is the voice of authority, that does not mean that all our comments need to be evaluative. As experienced writers and readers of student writers, teachers are vital members of writing communities. In a community of caring, interested readers, the teacher's voice can be one of guidance that points students to new opportunities regarding genres to pursue or topics to develop. We need not be concerned about every grammatical error for every piece. Shifting the teacher's focus from one of search for errors to one of guiding students toward successful communication is closely related to Donald Murray's (1985) work on audience and Thomas Newkirk's (1984) study of peer response. As teachers, we too, must engage in conversation with student writers that is motivated by a desire to help them improve their craft, not just a need to put a grade on their work.

Student Choice in the Writing Class

The third layer in writing instruction is providing students with choices throughout the process. Atwell (1992), an early proponent of the writing workshop model with middle school

students, advocates the need for individualized writing topics. Other educators and researchers agree. When students write on topics they care about, they are more likely to think deeply about the topic and seek to find ways to communicate their ideas effectively. Though much of the research on student choice is decades old, we still need to read it. Many classrooms feature students writing on one topic, writing in the same genre or churning the same stale responses. Students use writing to communicate in every field. They should be able to participate and communicate with the vast quantities of information available to them.

Peter Elbow (1973, 2000b) remains one of the earliest and most steadfast advocates of student choice in writing workshops. As one of the earliest proponents of freewriting as a valuable tool for generating student ideas and providing students the opportunity to become comfortable with generating writing, Elbow urges teachers to give students the freedom to choose their own topics. “If we teach only academic discourse we will surely fail at this most important goal of helping students to use writing by choice in their lives” (p. 236). Only when students are free to choose their own topics to explore and their own genres to pursue will writing be an authentic means of communication. More importantly, allowing students to choose their writing topics and genres is crucial to creating lifelong writers.

Both Atwell (1992) and Rief (1992) are practitioners who write about the importance of choice in a writing classroom. These teachers model and research a writing workshop model in which students choose all the texts they read and write. It is the teacher’s job in this type of classroom to guide students toward deeper understanding of text and richer expressions in their writing. The teacher serves as a guide and mentor to encourage student progress and to respond thoughtfully to the ways in which individual students can grow as writers. While it is necessary that teachers use their expertise to set goals to guide students to becoming proficient, fluent

writers, the path that students take to get to those goals varies from student to student. Rief (1992) celebrates this diversity, acknowledging that “no matter what [she] present[s], each student sees it differently and takes his or her own meaning from that experience . . . We are all learners/teachers” (p. 2). The goal in classrooms such as these for middle school and high school age writers is to become lifelong readers and writers. To make meaningful and personal the work of a writer is integral to a successful workshop classroom.

Likewise, Smagorinsky (2008) advocates a kind of workshop model where students choose to respond to literature, comment on personal experience, and explore topics of interest in a writing community guided by a sensitive teacher. Smagorinsky’s (2008) attention to audience relates to both Newkirk (1984) and Elbow (2000). He advises “teachers should offer encouragement [and] include commentary that is conversational and not just corrective” (Smagorinsky, 2008, p. 101). In particular, Smagorinsky (2008) advises teachers to consider audience primarily when determining how writing should be evaluated. It is necessary to consider evaluating student writing beyond judging if it is good or bad. He writes “the text itself is not good or bad; rather, different readers are more or less in tune with the writing conventions used by the writer” (Smagorinsky, 2008, p. 106). When considered together, then, continual practice, community building and student choice are a necessary web of interconnected participation in a writing workshop. Each component, when implemented with consideration of a writer’s needs and wants can allow students to become lifelong writers and astute discerners of quality writing.

Writing Standards in a Dual Enrollment Context

Recent educational trends, including the implementation of standards-based curricula and the popularity of dual enrollment opportunities in high school classes are changing the ways in

which we approach teaching writing to adolescent students. Teacher researchers have supported the workshop model, implemented with great attention to student interest and individual goals, for years. However, we must consider how and when (and if) to transition students to more academic discourse. The Common Core State Standards, though controversial in many educational circles, lean heavily toward preparing students for the kind of analytical, informational writing that many post-secondary schools require. Common Core represents only one model of writing proficiency. Moreover, its adoption by school districts has become a political quagmire in which pedagogical possibilities and critiques are often lost. In particular, discussions of Common Core often leave important questions unanswered: Does personal writing help students to become good analytical writers later? How do teachers build a bridge from personal writing to more traditional, academic topics that students will inevitably encounter in college? Questions such as these require exploration and consideration, if we intend to prepare students not only for college but also for life beyond college.

Moreover, it is worth noting that there are no standardized plans for writing proficiency in college. Each institution and particular departments within each institution are left to articulate and define what writing proficiency looks like for themselves. Every discipline seems to have different rules, and students must become adept at shaping their writing to suit the discipline, course, and instructor for whom they write. Perhaps part of the responsibility of writing teachers in high school, then, is to introduce students to this tension with the expectation that good writing is malleable writing to suit a variety of audiences and purposes.

Possibilities for Success

Like many researchers of writing instruction, Smagorinsky (2008) adopts a constructivist approach to writing instruction. Rather than viewing errors in student writing as mistakes or

signs of ignorance, he sees them as evidence of student growth. Students who try out unfamiliar grammatical constructions, points of view or genre make mistakes along the way, but they are pushing themselves to try on new forms of expression. Such “errors,” then, are necessary steps on the road toward building confident writers. We must recognize, however, that as our students move through school, their needs as writers and the expectations placed on them as writers change. They will eventually be held accountable for using language responsibly, appropriately, and correctly in terms of grammar and mechanical conventions, especially if our students seek education beyond high school. As teachers of writing, we must hold the tension between providing our students an outlet for communication and expectation and pushing them to hone the skills adult writers must acquire to be accepted in professional communities. Murray (1985) reminds us, moreover, “there is no way to predict with any accuracy what a class, or a student, knows or needs to know. Each individual writing student has a pattern of strengths and weaknesses, and we must find out what they are so that we can respond to them” (p. 137). While this statement underscores a pragmatic theory of writing instruction, it also indicates that teachers, too, must use experience and context to frame writing instruction. Further research and future writing instruction includes a need for awareness of the kinds of experiences students have had and will have in their writing endeavors. Investigation into these experiences could also reveal the emerging set of skills and habits students must practice while simultaneously acquiring sophisticated writing and language skills.

Though many of Elbow’s strategies are applicable to young writers in middle or high school, the theory behind his method is true for any writer. Even though we see the need to teach student writers particular modes of discourse for academic purposes, they still must value writing as a means of communication within themselves and between themselves and an audience. In

fact, Elbow (2000b) argues for one kind of nonacademic discourse “that tries to render experience rather than explain it” (p. 237). It is often through nonacademic discourses that students engage with an audience and convey what it is like to live in their worlds, to see their world as they see it. To cultivate that deep level of empathy in both a student writer and an audience is powerful. To see the possibilities of human connection that can be achieved with writing strengthens student writers. As students move up to college-level writing courses, “freshmen composition teachers have a responsibility to introduce the nuances and features of multiple kinds of discourse—there is no singular academic discourse that will suffice in every discipline” (p. 255). Recognizing that student writing needs change as they get older raises important questions regarding the nature of teaching writing.

It is important to note that an individual’s writing skills are never complete; one never finishes learning to write. However, as students mature and move through school, they need to feel confident in those skills that will help them in the next grade level, the next course, or the next writing task. Learning discrete skills matter, but so does an individual’s ability and desire to take risks and accept ownership in their writing journey. This path toward writing well is not linear. Success often depends on the individual’s continued willingness to undertake the journey, with all its complicated detours, as much as it does on an individual’s ability to demonstrate mastery of specific skills. No matter the pathway a student undertakes, successful writing instruction must account for personal differences in skills and interests. Moreover, successful writing for college students must also account for the particular conventions and expectations of academic disciplines. Students who can call upon a wide range of writing skills and who can vary their writing for particular audiences and purposes will likely experience success in college and beyond.

CHAPTER 3. NARRATIVE INQUIRY AND METHODOLOGY

Narrative inquiry is a branch of qualitative research that collects and presents the experience of an individual, a group of individuals, or a relatively small institution such a school, as an organized, readable story. Clandinin and Connelly (1994) define narrative inquiry as “living the experience, telling the experience, and interpreting the experience” (qtd. in Riessman, 2008, p. 204). The presentation of narrative research requires that the researcher gather, interpret, and reflect on the experiences in which he or she collected data for narrative inquiry. Since life experience rarely occurs in a neat, definable story, researchers must interpret and “restory” the data to look for themes, characters, significant settings, and conflict. Publishing narrative research involves creating a story that is meaningful, easy to follow, and helps to answer a research question. The purpose of this chapter is to describe and contextualize the methods of a narrative study that explored students’ experiences in making the transition between high school and college writing. This chapter outlines the significance of narrative as a methodology and its use in interpreting and presenting the lived experience of college students as they reflect on their high school writing classes and describe their writing experiences as undergraduate students.

In framing research questions, I sought out research on dual enrollment opportunities for high school students, writing pedagogy, and the measures of success in advanced credit programs such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual enrollment. I also considered theoretical perspectives that inform writing instruction and relationships among teachers and students. My intention is to investigate the ways in which advanced college credit programs prepare high school students for college classes and how these programs help students manage the transition between high school and college. In studying the narratives of student writers, I hope to uncover some habits and practices that successful students use to become

proficient writers in college. In reporting the findings of this study, I situate myself in the role of both interpreter and listener. The interpretations I offer of the narratives are mine based on my own research questions. Still, in honoring the lived experiences of the participants, I have tried to allow their words to reveal the details and reflections they shared with me whenever possible. The participants' stories overlap in complicated ways, but the themes and similarities I have gleaned from them is my own interpretation and participation in the narratives they share.

Research Study

Overview of the Study and Sample Selection

This was a qualitative study using narrative, phenomenological, and case study methods. The purpose of the study was to explore the student experiences in the transition between challenging high school course work in advanced college creditclasses and undergraduate classes in a university setting. In using narrative methods, I exploredClandinin and Connelly's (2000) discussion of narrative inquiry data collection, interpretation and presentation. In telling the stories of the students who participated, I investigatedthe phenomenon of taking a college course as a high school student as it pertains to individuals who have experienced the phenomenon.

Although the participants in this study have earned credit in the same course, college freshman-level English composition, the students' experiences and paths in undergraduate courses varied.To delve deeply into their stories of experience, I used narrative inquiry methods of semi-structured interviews and coded the data based on the participants' responses (Saldaña, 2016).Using thick description and narrative inquiry methods allowed me to consider the research question in the context of the unique experiences of the individuals in the study (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Savin-Baden and Howell-Major, 2013). A phenomenological study using narrative methods allowed me to explore the unique experiences of the individuals

who participated in the study. In studying the narratives of individuals as a phenomenon, I was able to make connections among the participants within the context of their unique experiences (Savin-Baden and Howell-Major, 2013). The stories of their experiences revealed the details of their unique experience and pave the way for further inquiry into how to develop successful dual enrollment programs with diverse groups of students.

I used convenience sampling to select six undergraduate college students who have received dual enrollment credit for the freshman-level composition course at a state university. To select participants, I requested current email lists of alumni who had completed dual enrollment freshman composition classes from the high school where I currently teach, and I requested the same from three different schools where I have working relationships with teachers. One of the schools complied with my request. A teacher from a second school posted a request for participation on social media, and those interested students contacted me directly via email. The third school declined to participate.

The schools were able to provide email addresses of students who had completed some kind of advanced credit: dual enrollment, International Baccalaureate, or Advanced Placement. I sent an initial email to students, along with an online survey link using Qualtrics, an online survey platform that was available from LSU (APPENDIX A, B). I sent emails to 137 students and received 29 responses. Students who agreed to participate were sent a second online survey requesting possible meeting times.

Of the second batch of surveys, I received 14 acceptance responses. Eight students of these agreed to meet for interviews. One student ultimately declined to participate, and one student was removed from the study because she had already completed her undergraduate degree. The six participants in this study represented three different paths toward advanced credit

in freshman composition: four received the International Baccalaureate Diploma; one received dual enrollment credit, and one received a combination of dual enrollment and Advanced Placement credit. At the time of the study, all the participants were students in four-year colleges or universities. Two of the participants were graduating seniors. The remaining four participants had between one and four semesters left before college graduation (Table, p. 5).

All the participants were undergraduate college students who both received advanced credit in a college writing course and who completed at least four semesters of course work on a college campus. These participants shared their experiences in multiple college classes, and each of them had been away from high school long enough to reflect on how their experiences in advanced credit classes may have influenced their writing experiences in college.

Data Collection and Analysis

Beginning in January 2018, participants initially met in three different focus groups of between two and three students each. I followed a semi-structured interview protocol for these meetings (APPENDIX C). One group met with me in a conference room at a university library. The two other groups met online via the Zoom video conferencing platform. Using Zoom allowed students from different universities to participate, and it allowed all of us to meet at convenient times. I met with all the participants three separate times over the course of one semester. In addition, I communicated with the participants through email. Email proved to be a convenient, reliable way for me to send electronic links to the video conferences and for the participants to send writing samples and artifacts directly to me. To ensure privacy, writing samples and artifacts were saved to my personal flash drive and deleted from my email account.

As is true in many qualitative studies, the data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously (Savin-Baden and Howell-Major, 2013). I read, reflected on and coded each

piece of data as I collected it. In coding the data, I primarily used Saldaña's (2016) In Vivo method in which codes emerge from the words and phrases the participants use in the interviews. I looked for themes as an "outcome of coding" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 15). My reading and coding allowed new interview questions to emerge between participant meetings. I was able to use the participants' stories to discover themes and shape the inquiry as the study progressed. The follow-up questions I used in each interview stemmed from the participants' responses. Our interviews became more like conversations, with my interjecting questions when I wished to know more or when I wished to begin a new topic of discussion.

The focus group and individual interview discussions focused on each participant's advanced credit opportunities and gave participants a forum to discuss how these experiences affected their writing in college. The focus group meetings allowed the participants to share their stories with each other, sometimes revealing similarities between the participants that may not have been perceptible otherwise. However, because each of these students experienced advanced credit in high school differently and because each followed a unique path after high school, their stories diverge in complicated ways.

Later in the semester, I met individually with the participants to gather more details about their narratives as college writers. I collected and discussed the writing samples they shared with me. In our final meetings, I asked participants to reflect on their emerging identities as writers and to describe their journeys as writers, beginning with their advanced credit courses. This study represents a close look at a brief moment of an individual's educational experience. The parameters imposed on this study, namely the focus on the writing opportunities students had between high school and college and the intention to study a small group of participants over an set length of time, are largely arbitrary. I determined these parameters for the context of this

study. I do not intend to assert or imply that these boundaries represent any real starting or ending point in the life experiences of these students.

In the findings chapter, I use Liz's narrative as a frame for the data analysis. She spent much of our time in her individual interviews reflecting on herself as a writer and a collector of stories. This metanarrative served as a bridge between the questions I wanted to investigate and the life experience of the participants. Ultimately, I imposed order on their stories, but I tried to allow their words to shape the themes I used in analyzing their narratives (Saldaña, 2016).

The following sections outline a brief history of narrative inquiry, a discussion of data collection and interpretation, and an overview of possible validity and ethical concerns in a study such as the one I conducted. Finally, this chapter addresses the possibilities and limitation of narrative research on students.

History of Narrative as Inquiry

The study I conducted draws on a rich history of narrative inquiry. Narrative as ontology, epistemology and methodology can be traced to early ethnographic studies conducted by European anthropologists interested in exploring indigenous people in colonized areas of the world (Denizen and Lincoln, 1994). As such, ethnography traces its roots as a research method to the desire to tell the story of the "other." Thus, such ethnographic research has endured a problematic history. Within the context of quantitative, positivist methods from which ethnography emerged, there has been an assumption of truth and a privileging of some stories over others. In other words, the subjects of early qualitative study were seen as exotic and different from the researchers. It was the researcher's job to make sense of quaint experience through a more sophisticated, Western lens of interpretation. As qualitative methodology has endured through history, researchers have all but abandoned the positivist goal of learning the

absolute truth about an individual or group. Instead, qualitative research acknowledges and embraces the idea of multiple truths and multiple narratives, while abandoning the notion that any one perspective or version of experience is a definitive truth.

Stories frame our understanding of experience. We organize our memories as collections of stories; we construct the answers to our questions as stories. Narratives provide a way to share and construct meaning from experience and to connect experiences among people. In many ways, constructing and sharing narratives is the fundamental way we become human. In terms of narrative inquiry as a research method, telling, crafting and interpreting stories occupies a diverse body of research. Broadly, we understand narrative as “both phenomena under study *and* method of study” (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 4, italics in original). Scholars have posited that narrative is not just method or fodder for research studies. Narrative lies in a rich place of methodological, epistemological, and perhaps even ontological significance (Clandinin and Rosiek, 2007; Hendry, 2007; Hickson, 2016).

As an epistemology, narrative draws on Dewey’s (1938) philosophy of experience. Experience, for Dewey, is both personal and social. Narrative is a way of knowing ourselves and each other and a way to organize our interpretations of experience. Dewey’s idea that experience is the understanding of people in relation to each other temporally and contextually informs our notion of narrative as a method of research and as a means of presenting research. “Narrative inquiry is an experience of the experience. It is people in relation studying people in relation” (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 189). Postmodern philosophy provides a way of understanding the benefits of situating research questions as explorations of relationships among people and among people and life experience.

Abandoning the notion of a master narrative allows us to expand and rethink our ideas of narrative. Postmodern philosophy does not privilege one point of view, nor does it insist on a hierarchy of importance when considering which research questions or experiences to investigate. As I interpret it, one aspect of postmodernism in this context allows the researcher to ask questions regarding assumptions of privilege. As qualitative methods have become accepted in educational research, researchers grapple with perspective and interpretation in drafting and exploring research questions. Research in feminist theory, race theory and queer theory has illuminated the question of perspective.

If we see that the subjects of our research are situated at intersections of race, gender, economy, etc., then we also understand that such intersections are reflected in the perspectives of the researcher as well. The questions I ask, in other words, are my questions, dependent on my own experience and situation as a raced, gendered person. Exploring research in a postmodern context, then, opens the possibility of considering any research question, any perspective and any experience as the basis for inquiry (Vidich and Lyman, 1994). The impetus for my study has emerged from my experience as a classroom teacher and my own struggles with negotiating the transition between high school and college English classes with my own students. I want to be open to hearing my participants' stories, but I must acknowledge that my experience and beliefs have guided my work up to this point. Throughout my interpretation of data, my biases will shape the way I view my participants. It is impossible to take my own views out of my research, but I will need to actively consider the ways in which my experience may shape my interpretation of my participants' stories.

My participants are also contextualized at the intersections of race, class, gender and privilege. I made the choice not to include overt questions regarding race, class, gender, or

privilege. I allowed the participants to determine whether to discuss these facets of their identity or not. Some of the participants, like Liz and Calliope, frame their experiences through the lenses of race and class. None of the participants discussed in great detail the impact of race, class, or gender for the purpose of this study. An exploration into the relationship of race, class, gender and privilege and student writing knowledge is a possibility for a future project.

Theoretically, narrative inquiry challenges realism and positivism (Riessman, 2008). Realist, positivist epistemology, which dominated research studies well into the twentieth century, attempts to use research to discover the truth about a particular group, life experience, or issue. Positivist research is characterized often as using empirical data, such as measurements, statistics and demographic evidence. Additionally, the purpose of positivist research was to create objective data that could withstand the rigors of experimental scrutiny; validity and reliability are desirable here. As researchers have pushed the boundaries of qualitative methodology and as narrative as both an ontology and epistemology has emerged and flourished, many have begun to accept the futility of seeking the truth or the answer as a conclusion of research (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Vidich and Lyman, 1994). As such, narrative inquiry opens spaces of questioning and possibility in any field. It validates the individual's relationship with his or her own lived experience –the way that he or she reflects on his or her own telling of life-- while simultaneously honoring the relationship between the researcher, participant and topic of research. With few “rules” to the method, narrative inquiry invites issues of ethical responsibility. Specifically, for me, the concern of qualitative researchers not to “get it all wrong” (Moen, 2006, p. 64) raises a key question: in an effort not to “get it all wrong,” what does it mean to get it right?

As ontology, narrative provides a lens through which to view that which is primary: “relationships are primary” (Hendry, 2007, p. 492). Drawing on Foucault’s (1972) notion of genealogy, Tamboukou (2008) asserts that one of the functions of narrative inquiry is continually to “[uncover] layers of distortions/constructions and is directed to the future rather than the past” (p. 102). In fact, from a Foucauldian perspective, all history begins in the present. Accordingly, it is the historian’s and the researcher’s job, then, to excavate an “ontology of the present” (Tamboukou, 2008, p. 109), in which “narratives . . . emerge in contexts, saturated by power/knowledge relations that keep destabilizing their meanings and characters” (p. 106). Counter to a Marxian, positivist position, Foucault is concerned with the ways in which knowledge is deployed as power rather than as a commodity or as a fixed truth. From Foucault’s (1972) post-structuralist lens, history, and indeed all narrative, can be interpreted as discursive formations, relationships between and among diverse participants that continually shift, emerge and tug at each other through the tensions of mutual agency. To view narrative inquiry as a genealogy, to value it for the *process* of sifting through the archives of life experience, is to further complicate an already muddy field.

Similarly, Mazzei (2017) challenges the idea of single subjectivity and grapples with the concept of voice in narrative research. She draws on the work of Deleuze and Guattari who describe voice as a “collective assemblage of enunciation” (qtd. in Mazzei, 2017, p. 675). Mazzei (2017) posits the concept of minor inquiry, which begins with a problem rather than with a subject or method. For Mazzei, it is the concept itself that drives inquiry. Concepts, such as the concept of voice in Mazzei’s work, continually becomes and emerges; it is “in flux” and does not “[follow] a predetermined trajectory or direction” (p. 676). Expanding the focus of research to include a problem of inquiry itself opens up possibility. Mazzei describes the inquiry into a

concept as a contour, “fundamentally changing the shape of inquiry as the contour of concepts allow connections to flow and bend” (p. 676). The subject here is secondary to the concept. In fact, it is impossible to capture a single voice. Mazzei further asserts that an attempt to “congeal” or interpret a voice “fix[es] thought and thereby arrest[s] becoming” (p. 676). To my understanding, eliminating the notion of single subjectivity in narrative research does not assume that any one individual’s narrative is representative of a collective whole. Rather, an individual’s narrative is the articulation of an accumulation of experience and an interconnected piece of a complex whole.

In imagining a way to use the concept of voice in narrative inquiry, Mazzei (2017) suggests that researchers talk to participants with the intention to describe “connectives, to think about how things [work] together” (p. 681). Mazzei considers voice as

collective enunciation, without origins or beginnings. It is a series of tangled ‘narratives’ that map a dynamic, changing typology, continually becoming. There are no singular subjects, or static places, or traceable times. There is no planned moment in the field or analysis of interview transcripts (p. 683).

Imagining narrative devoid of a single subjective voice is an ontological consideration. Whose stories does narrative inquiry tell? One way to consider the ontology of narrative is its specificity: narrative inquiry is relevant only to the context and participants studied. It resists generalization and replication. On the other hand, Mazzei (2017) imagines the inversion of such particular circumstances. Narrative inquiry may be unique to a particular context and to the participants involved, but those participants do not speak only for themselves. Mazzei (2017) deterritorializes voice and posits that no individual speaks as a single subject. Instead, we are all a collection of our experiences, relationships, and geography. The possibilities for future narrative research are powerful. When taken together, narrative inquiries open up understanding and provide a multi-dimensional perspective. Mazzei’s (2017) work, situated in a larger context

of qualitative research, reinforces the possibility of exploring and considering narratives. If voice cannot be reduced to a single subject, then researchers, participants and readers may see themselves as part of the interconnected narrative.

Collecting Data, Interpreting Stories

As a method, narrative inquiry provides a means for researchers to create stories in exploration of research questions. Participants tell their stories in the context of research, and the relationship between researchers and participants to inform each other. By using narrative as both a method for conducting research and as a way of thinking through our research questions, we acknowledge multiple layers of narrative itself. We record experience ordered as narrative; we use narrative to interpret experience; and we collect narratives from participants who have organized their own experiences into meaningful stories. The answer to any inquiry is narrative—all data tell a story (Clandinin and Rosiek, 2007; Hendry, 2010).

Data Collection

When gathering data, the relationship between the researcher and the participant is vital. A researcher must gain the participant's trust to listen, interpret, and tell the story in a way that is meaningful and respectful. The participant knows he or she is part of a study, and though that may influence some of the data that is collected (or the manner in which the data is provided), a trusting relationship can also lend itself to the collection of rich, thorough, thoughtful stories to inform the narrative study.

Data collection in narrative inquiry takes a wide variety of forms. Primarily, the raw data for narrative inquiry are field texts, notes and descriptions recorded by researchers during participant interviews and observations. Beyond that, data collection can be any media that can be used to construct a narrative. In educational research, these can be teacher and/or student

interviews, journals, letters, documents and artifacts, including photographs, drawings, and student work. With a wide variety of data potentially available to researchers, the issue is not finding rich data to gather, but rather, knowing how to use the wealth of data available and knowing when to stop and frame the narrative for presentation (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Clandinin and Connelly, 2000).

Many narrative researchers employ a systematic process to collect, edit and interpret the data they collect. Often, data include field texts, which can range from interview notes to a researcher's personal journal entries to descriptive data provided by an institution. It is usually beneficial to read, edit and attempt to make sense of field texts as they are collected. As themes and patterns emerge in the data collected, the researcher may need to revisit research sites, conduct further interviews with participants, or revise and reframe research questions. The nature of data collection supports the idea that narrative inquiry emerges. There is no way to predict what the data will show, so researchers must work with what they have until there is a more or less clear interpretation of the data. As editing the data is a recursive process, the researcher often begins to frame field texts into research texts early in the collection process. In addition to being able to shift questions and data collection, an advantage to interpreting field texts throughout the process is that both the researcher and the participant can assist each other in framing and telling the story. There is opportunity throughout the data collection for a participant to reflect, clarify, or elaborate (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Riesman, 2008).

Narrative data lend themselves to a range of forms of presentation. Narrative, as part of a broader context of qualitative data, is often presented using pragmatic techniques. In other words, researchers use a variety of available methods to present a clear narrative of the individuals or groups at the center of the study. Many researchers employ literary techniques,

ranging from the fictionalizing of some aspects of the story to protect anonymity or to provide literary continuity to quantitative data that are explained and nuanced by the individuals' stories (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Clandinin and Connelly, 2000).

It is the researcher's job to create a "storied analysis" (Kramp, 2004, p. 120). According to Polkinghorne (1995), researchers must "fit the data while at the same time bringing an order and meaningfulness that is not apparent in the data themselves" (qtd. in Kramp, 2004, p. 120). Interpreting and ordering the data in a meaningful way can provide "rich analysis of the stories [of the] research participants" (Kramp, 2004, p. 120). There is never a "right" way to interpret data. Researchers must interpret data as thoroughly and thoughtfully to represent someone's lived experience as accurately as possible. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Kramp (2004) acknowledge that ownership of stories can be a contentious issue. There must be a relationship between the storyteller (the participant) and the interpreter (the researcher). Only when both respect each other and the process of telling the story can a researcher be reasonably sure that his or her findings are affirmed.

Such affirmation can be problematic, though, as narrative data collection, interpretation, and presentation are always messy, fragmented, partial versions of life experience. Sometimes life experience is not cohesive: it is contradictory and fragmented. We sometimes can only make sense of it in hindsight through reflection. Data can help us answer research questions, but we must acknowledge that our research questions may change as we, too, are shaped by the experience of participating in and recording the narrative data we seek.

I have attempted to present the data my participants provide as a collection of individual, yet connected narratives. Because all the participants have shared similar pathways toward their undergraduate college careers, their stories intersect and are part of a larger whole of advanced

credit experience. Each is different, though. I want to show the unique qualities of each student's stories while simultaneously situating those stories in the context of my own research questions and within a larger context of the experiences students have in various advanced credit programs. My research project intersects these students' experiences in the middle, not the beginning of their emergence as writers. Likewise, this project ended in the middle of their experience, not at the end. The stories the participants shared for this project represent one moment of their understanding. Their stories are valuable, rich, and pertinent to a discussion of advanced college credit, but they are not complete, whole, or finished.

Data Interpretation

Though Squire (2008) cautions against researchers' over-interpreting narrative data, it is interesting to me to consider the ways in which narrative data can be situated within a broader context of story itself. While there are ethical and methodological problems to be thought through and reconciled when analyzing narratives of human experience, narratives themselves do offer another layer of possible analysis. Why is it that stories themselves seem so natural to us? Squire (2008) draws on the work of Labov and even Socrates to consider that it is in fact the telling and sharing and interpreting of experience through story that makes us human. For example, Riessman (2008) situates her research participants as narrators in their own archetypal narratives, and Maynes, Pierce, and Laslett (2008) discuss narrative research which draws conclusions and establishes patterns based on the similarities between narratives of particular groups and individuals who have shared similar experiences, even if those groups and experiences are separated geographically and temporally. Perhaps, then, in addition to our using narratives as a way to understand more fully the unique-ness of human experience, narrative inquiry can also serve as a way to deepen our understanding of the commonality of human

experience. That is not to say that inquiry should seek to define and replicate a grand narrative of all human experience, but maybe there is something indefinable, yet crucial about connecting with someone's story even if the narrator is separated from the reader by time, gender, social class, native language and common experience. Could it be that the researcher's job is to find the kernel of truth in a story? And could it be that "truth" can be interpreted as that nebulous, resonating note that stirs what we share as human beings? In that regard, there is no single, correct narrative. Instead, researchers, narrators and readers can select methods, genres and interpretive tools to best tell the most true, most real story of a particular experience. It is the sensitivity with which we select our narratives and our interpretations that display the ironic particularity about stories that allow them to speak for more than just a single moment.

Not only do narrative researchers acknowledge the need to select methodology judiciously and to interpret data sensitively, but these researchers also turn the discussion on the researcher himself or herself. Narrative researchers recognize participants as agents who participate in the continual construction of their narratives. Moreover, narrative researchers will often turn the discussion toward themselves. Specifically, Weis et al. (2000) assert that researchers "have an ethical responsibility to retreat from the stance of dispassion all too prevalent in the academy" (p. 66). Embedded in this responsibility is the turn away from objectivity. Participants are not oddities to be studied; they are human beings who are often as interested in telling and making sense of their stories as the researcher is in hearing them. She asks researchers to consider forming narratives in multiple ways through multiple methodologies, and she urges those who study and write about individual people and communities to tackle difficult, complicated issues. In interpreting narrative data, it is necessary to situate oneself as a researcher who approaches a study with particular social, racial, cultural, etc. assumptions. Such

assumptions may both complicate and enrich the interpretation and presentation of narrative data.

Bruner (1991) sets forth a list of principles of narrative and how narratives are used in cultures to show that stories are an important way that we make sense of the world. He places narrative in a larger context of study in which people have attempted to “get a reliable fix on the world” (p. 1). As part of the attempt of a long history of researchers to understand the human mind, Bruner (1991) acknowledges that narrative does not fit neatly into a rationalist, empiricist view of the world. Rather than using narrative as a way to understand a fixed “real world,” Bruner (1991) considers narrative as constitutive of the world. It is interdependent on both storytellers and listeners and requires interpretation from both the storyteller and the participant.

For Bruner (1991), narrative is a valuable cultural tool. He asserts “the act of constructing a narrative, moreover, is considerably more than ‘selecting’ events from real life, from memory, or from fantasy and then placing them in an appropriate order. The events themselves need to be *constituted* in the light of the overall narrative” (p. 8, ital. in original). In other words, narrative allows us not only to report on our experience, but our experiences themselves are understood as a narrative that may be reported on or interpreted or shared later. We don’t create narrative necessarily; we live narrative and use storytelling reciprocally to make sense of our experience. In this regard, “narrative ‘truth’ is judged by its verisimilitude rather than its verifiability. There seems indeed to be some sense in which narrative, rather than referring to ‘reality,’ may in fact create or constitute it, as when ‘fiction’ creates a ‘world’ of its own” (p. 13). Just as narrative is one way we make sense of the world, any one narrative is also a thread in a larger fabric of understanding. Bruner argues that an individual sees himself or herself as “acting more or less purposefully in a social world” (p. 18). Bruner further posits that it is the accrual of all the

narratives of life collected, told, and interpreted by individuals that make up culture and history. Conducting narrative research is an overt way to contribute to cultural fabric.

In a discussion of Labov's structural analysis, Riessman (2008) and Patterson (2008) show both possibilities and limitations of using the language of narrative data to construct an interpretation of it. Structural analysis involves careful marking of narrative transcripts and attention to very specific narrative features. This method offers a more detailed reading of language than thematic analysis, but structural analysis is not necessarily the best nor the most appropriate method to analyze data. In fact, Patterson (2008) is critical of the Labovian method, indicating that "the Labovian method and model that has determined what the 'core narrative' is" (p. 30), rather than the narrative itself allowing the researcher to select the best methodological procedure. Another critique of Labovian analysis is that it is reductive and limiting; the integrity of the narrative is sometimes sacrificed for the method. An exciting possibility of narrative research is that it allows the researcher the freedom to explore his or her research data through virtually any theoretical framework or methodological procedure, while privileging none. The goal is to present a "truthful," "accurate" interpretation of the narrative itself, not show ultimate loyalty to a research paradigm. Though "truthful" and "accurate" are relative, I understand the terms to mean interpretation that presents a version of life experience which honors the intention of the participants and which thoughtfully contextualizes that experience in a broader scope of a research question.

Focusing on case study research and thematic analysis, Stake (2005) and Riessman (2008), respectively, define and attempt to offer possibilities concerning two approaches one often sees in qualitative research. In their discussions of case study and thematic narrative

analysis, the authors describe the key features of each category, as well as raise questions concerning methodology within a qualitative research study.

For all its benefits, including a limitless number of perspectives to consider, connections to make and questions to untangle, narrative inquiry can be problematic for the researcher. The researcher ultimately “completes” his or her study, while simultaneously being aware that the report is only an incomplete, partial, interpreted piece of a whole system or experience or narrative. Every choice made leaves dozens of other options rejected. While I appreciate that the “primary criterion [of qualitative research] is opportunity to learn” (Stake, p. 452), I grapple with the choices one must make for that opportunity. Riessman (2008) offers several examples of thematic narrative analysis that, in varying ways, manage to delve into specific research questions while simultaneously honoring the participants’ narratives as a whole. Still, how does a researcher begin to pare down, edit and rework research questions? If the investigative questions that we investigate change based on what we find in our collection of research material, is that a sign of learning, through refinement? Or is it a compromise of our standards, in that we “make do” with what we get (in terms of interview data, for example), rather than re-select a more appropriate (for our purposes) participant? And if we renege on our choices, does that represent a flaw in the ethics of our reporting of data, in that it could be seen that the researcher has manipulated the information and skewed his or her results? One of the criticisms of qualitative methods, particularly narrative, is that the focus of the research is quite specific. Often, narrative studies explore the experience of a handful of participants. Some may argue that this narrow focus is too interpretive and too dependent on subjective criteria and arbitrary choices to be of any use to anyone besides the researcher.

However, approaching curriculum as narrative attempts to disrupt the traditional ways in which we view schooling and the role of both teacher and student. Using narrative to tell the stories of students within the context of their positions as both learners and young adults offers a way to view the relationship between teacher and student, between student and curriculum and within the student and his or her emerging identity in new ways.

Educational autobiography is a way of metaphorically situating the writer within the context of his or her own learning. Though Pinar et al. (2004) acknowledge that autobiographical writing can be isolating, it is also important to consider the ways in which autobiography must be used in dialogue with others' experiences and stories. From a feminist perspective, autobiography offers an opportunity for the creation of identity and recursive reflection on the ways in which that identity is transformed by education and through relationships with others. This transformation is not without complication, however. William Ayers locates "convey[ing] a sense of individual life and collective design, of local detail and general structure, of personal integrity and social dimension" (qtd. in Pinar, 2004, p. 527) as one of the fundamental problems in utilizing autobiography in education. When one considers the myriad ways in which education has systematically isolated and fragmented both curriculum and students into separate, discrete entities, finding a way to include the life experiences of the actual people involved in education as an integral aspect of curriculum is almost radical.

Since the relationship between the researcher and participant is crucial to gathering successful narrative data, the researcher cannot separate himself or herself from the story. How does one interpret and report on data when the lines between researcher and participant are blurred? Validity takes on a slightly different meaning in narrative studies than in quantitative analysis; narrative studies do not have the same constraints, purposes, or implications that

empirical data do. One would not expect to replicate the results of a narrative study in a different context with different participants, for example. Reliability and validity here are concerned with the “validity of the story told by the participant and the validity of the analysis, or the story told by the researcher” (Riessman, 2008, p. 185). Theoretically, narrative research assumes a situated perspective. Results must be verified from within, rather than without. Only the participant and the researcher really know if they’ve gotten the story “right,” in other words.

The Issue of Validity

In qualitative studies, the concept of validity becomes problematic. If we assume, from a postmodern theoretical perspective, that there are no intended conclusions at the outset of a research study, then how is it possible to design a valid study? If researchers can only describe research findings through an interpretive, fluid position of subjectivity at some point after an amount of research data has been collected, then the writing itself can be made valid in any way one wishes. In other words, if we only come to an understanding of our research after collecting, interpreting writing about it, then, we can retroactively re-work research questions to suit our findings.

Riessman (2008) favors looking at two levels of validity in narrative projects: “the story told by a research participant and the validity of the analysis, or the story told by the researcher” (p. 184). Viewing validity in this manner takes into account the situated perspective of the researcher. Since narrative both creates and reflects on experience, the researcher bears the responsibility of judiciously selecting methods of data collection and reporting which acknowledge and make clear both the perspective of the researcher and the partial, emerging nature of the narrative itself. Riessman (2008) further encourages students new to narrative methods to “ground their claims for validity by carefully documenting the processes they used to

collect and interpret data” (p. 193). She further asserts, “following a methodical path, documenting claims, and practicing reflexivity strengthens the case for validity” (p. 193). Meeting multiple times with my participants, recording and transcribing interviews, and sharing drafts of my interpretation with the participants will allow me to accomplish the kind of valid work that Riessman (2008) describes.

Qualitative researchers often refer to validity as a way of determining if they are not “getting it quite right,” according to Geertz (qtd. in Wolcott, 1994, p. 347). However, Wolcott’s (1994) argument is that what qualitative researchers call validity is something much more complex entirely. Since much of qualitative research relies on interpretation based on the perspective of the researcher, his or her relationship to his or her participants and his or her integrity and awareness of audience and purpose, “not getting it quite right” (p. 347) often has as much to do with the actual writing of the research itself as it does the content of the data collected. I appreciate Wolcott’s candor and conversational style; his seemingly honest, frank tone appears to come of a genuine interest in revealing the qualitative, particularly ethnographic or narrative studies, in fact, considering the shocking and very personal nature of the narrative Wolcott (1994) includes at the end of his chapter, validity seems to be the least of a researcher’s considerations. Instead, as Wolcott (1994) concludes, “*understanding* seems to encapsulate the idea [of validity] as well as any other everyday term” (p. 367, italics in original). Validity, understanding, interpretation, any of the facets of research that we attempt to define and “get right” remain, to a large degree, indefinable. Metaphorically, if we look at narrative inquiry and qualitative research as a faceted crystal, we can come close to picturing and describing the complexities of the field. However, a crystal, as a rigid, ordered, precise thing cannot begin to

approximate the murky, constantly shifting field of writing and interpreting qualitative and narrative data.

Furthermore, Riessman (2008) summarizes the “ultimate test for validity” (p. 193) of a narrative study: pragmatic implications for future research. Even though some may be tempted to dismiss narrative, with its focus on individuals and small groups, case studies and inquiries into an individual’s experience are often the impetus for additional research. Investigation into case study research produces “context-dependent knowledge” which immerses students in the “messy detail” of real-life application of rules and predictive theories (p. 194). Deep knowledge of specific case studies is often the means by which further research develops. In addition, research on specific individuals and small groups focuses on minute detail. While particular details of an individual’s or group’s story may not be generalizable, it is the specific nuance of such experience that is interesting. Those details that lie outside the generalizable provide interesting fodder for producing new understandings and new study. A narrative researcher may never reach the truth of a story (not that there is a singular truth), but studies involving individual cases are valid if they inspire scholars to consider and question their assumptions and knowledge in a field. Engaging in narrative research is one way to generate knowledge and invigorate a field of study.

Hendry (2010) pushes the boundaries of narrative as both a method and an epistemology. In using narrative as a means of structuring experience and knowledge about experience, Hendry (2010) suggests “all inquiry is narrative,” and as such, “narrative functions as an overarching epistemology that cannot be reduced to a method” (p. 73). Considering narrative as an epistemology rather than just a means to collect and organize data opens up possibilities for using narrative to inform understandings about teaching and education. One of the appealing

aspects of narrative inquiry is its acceptance of doubts, tensions, and unpredictability. Narrative inquiry embraces the relationships between individuals and their retelling of their experiences.

Even quantitative data can be skewed, and even an empirical study fails to provide a truly complete picture of a research investigation. Narrative research often provides the researcher and reader with further questions for study, rather than with answers to research questions. In some instances, research that raises questions is as valuable as research that tries to answer questions. We participate in socially constructed knowledge; we construct knowledge daily, informally through our experiences. Narrative research, then, seems to resonate on a deeply personal, experiential level. Therefore, “naturalistic, ethnographic case materials, at least to some extent, parallel actual experience, feeding into the most fundamental processes of awareness and understanding” (Stake, p. 454). The number of choices and possibilities of interpretation a researcher faces is daunting. Qualitative researchers acknowledge they are unable to write about everything that might be important, especially when the topic studied is human experience. It is therefore important to consider carefully the tensions and options available when embarking on a qualitative study and to apply ethical criteria when crafting narrative studies.

Much of the research on the validity of narrative data reiterates the same point—narratives change and shift. Researchers must situate themselves within the context of their research and to re-think continually the relationships forged between themselves, their participants, the narratives themselves and the telling/writing of those narratives. Just as I know my prior knowledge and perception have guided the plans for my study, I also situate myself as a researcher throughout this process.

My story as a teacher and researcher matter, too. The reason why I am interested in the questions posed in this research is that the issues I will investigate matter to my teaching. I am

invested in helping students make a successful transition from high school to college, and I am interested in exploring ways to make the teaching of advanced college credit classes meaningful for high school teachers and university instructors. Though there are myriad possibilities and questions on which the authors of our texts elaborate, the point is clear: good qualitative research and good narrative inquiry depend upon the integrity of the researcher to make choices based on informed, considered knowledge and understanding of the complexities of the field.

My study included six participants who share key similarities in terms of advanced college credit and the pursuit of an undergraduate degree. I collected their narratives both in a group and individually, but I also collected writing samples from their advanced credit composition courses and from their college courses. Communicating with participants throughout the process allowed themes to emerge. Collecting multiple sources of data from focus group interviews, individual interviews, and writing samples allows as faithful a telling of lived experience as possible. Their stories and artifacts reveal that there is some connection between a student's writing, their perception of their writing, and the assessment of that writing.

Ethical Concerns

Just as researchers are concerned with the future implications of the research study, they must also be concerned with the implications of research reflexively on the participants of the study. Riessman (2008) expounds on the space between validity and ethics, though the two are interrelated. She indicates that ethical boundaries must be negotiated with each inquiry and advises researchers to communicate across and within disciplines to weave a nuanced understanding of the possibilities within the context of narrative inquiry. She advises researchers to “get on with the work of building a corpus of diverse exemplars, that is, narrative research that includes the detail and specificity needed to advance the field” (p. 200). Approaching ethical

concerns as a kind of metacognitive reflection is the way to explore the myriad ethical issues that emerge in collecting narrative data.

Like Riessman (2008), Clandinin and Connelly (2000) also see a need to study ethical practices with the same scrutiny with which we study the subjects of our inquiries. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) draw a distinction between the required, legal consent required by universities and the personal, relational concerns that affect researchers. One of the problematic areas of informed consent, the legal ethical requirement, is that most institutions require that all participants be informed as to how they will be asked to participate in a study in advance of the study. This kind of consent is nearly impossible to grant, as one cannot always predict the ways in which a participant will provide, interpret and review data. Moreover, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggest that perhaps a more important ethical concern is that of the researcher as a human being conducting inquiry involving other human beings. Successful narrative inquiry depends upon relationships between the researcher and participants. Just as we “consult our consciences about the responsibilities we have in a friendship, we need to consult our consciences about our responsibilities as narrative inquirers in a participatory relationship” (p. 172). Achieving an ethical relationship between participants and the way the data supplied by those participants is much more complicated than the legal requirements of universities.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) delve deeply into ethical issues regarding narrative inquiries. They offer anecdotal examples of murky ethical decisions and come to the conclusion that ethical issues, like narrative inquiry itself, are best accomplished when all parties involved communicate thoughtfully, honestly, and reflectively. Both participants and researchers must negotiate a delicate balance between telling a story as faithfully or truthfully or reliably as possible and protecting the emotions and identities of those involved. Researchers who

appreciate the participants as partners in the research process must navigate ways to deal with uncomfortable, unflattering and sometimes unsettling information.

The greatest ethical conundrum is to construct narrative interpretations that serve a valuable research purpose while sharing the ownership of the story with a participant who may or may not agree with the researcher's interpretation. I want to share my interpretations with my participants, and I want to give them the opportunity to make revisions to their own narratives. However, I also know that my decision is the final one; I have chosen what is included in the research finding. Throughout the project, I used my skills as a researcher and my experience as a teacher to interpret that data honestly. While I have not intended purposely to mislead the reader or misinterpret the data, I have had to make choices to include or disregard data based on the research questions I chose to investigate.

All the participants had the opportunity to read and offer feedback on their section of the research finding chapter. If a participant asked me not to include part of our conversation in this project, I honored her wishes. I also made choices regarding which sections of the interviews to include and where to draw connections between participants. Complicating my interpretation of the data is the fact that some of the participants in this study are my own former students. Our relationship as teacher and student affected the way those participants and I see each other. In many instances, our shared history allowed for an ease of conversation. Participants began some of their narratives with memories from my class. Time has passed since these participants were in high school, though, and from our conversations, it seems as though the participants were not hindered by their history with me to be honest in their stories. They no longer see me as an authority figure in their lives, and several times expressed relief at being able to talk about school without the constraints of a class assignment or the labels of "teacher" and "student."

Possibilities of Narrative: Teacher and Student Experiences

In considering how to approach a research project that includes my former students, I have drawn on the body of narrative inquiry that explores teachers' experiences in classrooms. Though what follows is not an exhaustive list, the authors cited here provide examples of the kind of research on teacher stories. Alsup (2006) conducted a study of new teachers and discovered that each felt most successful in environments where they could hone and refine unique professional identities. Nieto (2005) worked with teachers of various levels of experience in an attempt to define a good teacher. She suggests "in spite of the prevailing notion that teachers are simply technicians who know how to write lesson plans, prescribe prepackaged programs, discipline students, and evaluate them through rubrics, benchmarks, and tests, teachers are also professionals and intellectuals" (p. 9). Further, she explains that teachers are "enthusiastic lifelong learners who are deeply involved in their work and who defend both their students' right to an excellent education and their own rights as intellectuals and professionals" (Nieto, 2005, p. 9). Similarly, Hibler and Snyder (2015) equate watching good teachers teach with listening to poetry: "an individual class, like an individual line, may read as superficially awkward or smooth, prosaic or blunt, but it only reveals its deeper intent when taken as part of a larger whole" (p. 46). Each of these studies delves into unique experiences of small groups of teachers. The narratives included in each work reinforce what many believe about good teachers while simultaneously resisting district and state policies that increasingly limit teacher autonomy.

Narrative research on student experiences show similar results: individual narratives can both resist and reinforce stereotypes and underscore the need to see education as an endeavor between human beings. Every student has his or her own story to tell; every classroom has its own rhythm, and every teacher brings unique skills and experience into the space of education.

Many studies of classroom practice rely at least in part on student narrative. Townsend et al. (2013), for example, use student narrative as evidence to support the need for meaningful writing feedback in a high school classroom. This study is somewhat typical of research in the field of classroom instruction, in that the authors tell the story of the phenomenon they are studying, and student voices serve as support for a larger discussion of classroom practice. The purpose here is to shed light on pedagogical practice so that teachers can better instruct students. Likewise, Thomas (2013) echoes similar findings regarding feedback to student writing. The article's narrative component, though, is the author's own experience as a student, not his students' experience in his own classroom.

Narrative research that is focused on student voices is far less common than research on teacher narratives. Some studies, such as Greer and Trofimoff (2013), provide a narrative of student experience without citing specific student narratives. While it is possible that the omission of student narratives is an effort to protect anonymity or even to subvert tricky ethical issues surrounding the use of children in a research study, ignoring student voices and ignoring to address the choice of omitting student voices seem problematic in the context of narrative inquiry. Studies that use student narrative in a subordinate position to authoritative teacher voices seem to be the rule, rather than the exception (Townsend et al., 2013, Thomas, 2013; Greer and Trofimoff, 2013).

Interestingly, articles in *The English Journal* frequently rely on some type of narrative component to engage readers and to provide a context for discussions bridging educational theory and practice. Articles in *The High School Journal* often reflect more traditionally rigorous research methods. Of the research I read for this chapter, only *The High School Journal* offered a narrative study that privileged the voices and narratives of students, independent of summary

from an authoritative adult interpreter (Woodcock and Beal, 2013). Woodcock and Beal (2013) focus their attention on “the experiences of actual students who participate in school reform efforts” (p. 57). This study drew on the experiences of high school students enrolled in early college high school programs. The intention of this narrative study, unlike other works that address school reform and advanced college credit, privileged the voices of students and allowed the researchers to “attend to both the personal and social conditions of the ECHS participants” (p. 60). Likewise, I intend for my work to illuminate the lived experience of students who must negotiate complicated paths toward college credit. Narrative, whether it’s teacher stories or student stories, serve to contextualize and complicate our assumptions and understandings of education. In the context of narrative inquiry, studies that use teacher narrative, student narrative, and combinations of each open up questions regarding reflexivity and ownership. Besides providing rationales for creative teaching ideas, what more could studying the narratives of student experience provide for educational researchers? What do we learn from the stories we tell? What are we missing from the stories we (perhaps inadvertently) silence?

I cannot separate myself as a researcher from myself as an educator. My participants were not all students I have taught, but it has been impossible not to see each of them as students I could have taught. I found myself invested in their stories from our initial email communication. There were few consequences for the participants in this study. I wanted them to be honest with me, but I appreciate that honesty often involves vulnerability. In looking back on the data I have collected and interpreted, it is my intention that my experience as an educator provided me with sensitivity and a desire to look closely at the voices of individuals. It is rare in many classrooms, mine included, that I can ask students to reflect on their writing and offer them my undivided attention. In that regard, I saw myself as a researcher to these participants and not

a teacher. Nevertheless, I am always thinking about ways to teach better. Throughout the process, I felt the tension between listening deeply to the participants' stories and imagining ways to use the information they provided to revise the way I will work with students in the future.

Limitations of Narrative Inquiry

Fook and Gardner (2007) suggest attention be given to critical reflection, “a technique of deconstructing stories . . . to understand assumptions about knowledge, power and reflexivity” (qtd. in Hickson, 2016, p. 384). Critical reflection enables researchers to consider the various relationships and manifestations of power in the telling, collecting and interpreting of narratives. Engaging in narrative inquiry indicates that stories are collected for a purpose; they are told with a purpose and they are interpreted for a purpose. To recognize the power relationships between the researcher and participant acknowledges that no story is ever told or interpreted in isolation. As researchers, we must undertake the responsibility not to eliminate issues of power, but to work through them, consider them, and honor the ways in which our questions inform, shape and change the narratives we tell and collect in relation with participants.

As a researcher with experience as a classroom teacher, my perspective will undoubtedly influence my research questions and rapport with participants. Acknowledging and using such influence can offer insight and richness to the research questions as well. Autobiographical theory and feminist scholarship allow for the collapsing of boundaries between teacher and student, learner and curriculum. Rather than interpret the experience of education as a series of hierarchical roles, an autobiographical lens interprets education as the creation and reflection upon relationships among learners, teachers, and curriculum. Through the various means of creating autobiography, including journaling, recapturing of the self and collective biography, it

is possible to understand education deeply through the people who participate in it. It is interesting to consider the richness afforded to curriculum scholars and even to teachers and students who allow people to reflect on, discuss, and interpret their experiences in learning. Furthermore, it is exciting to consider the ways in which autobiographical writing can transform the character of education to allow for the shifting and re-negotiation of the boundaries between teachers, students, and the curriculum.

Though narrative is most often seen as dichotomous to positivist research, Hendry (2007) indicates that the relationship between the two may in fact be stronger than many consider. All inquiry is narrative; all data are narrative. Any research question must be answered, interpreted and crafted as an amalgam of diverse bits of evidence. Statistics, observation, experience, etc. combine to tell a story that is relevant only in the framing and organization of a capable researcher.

Limitations of This Study

This study provided me the opportunity to look closely at the writing of a small number of undergraduate writers. Conducting a study like this with specific parameters regarding advanced credit experience and undergraduate writing experience allowed for a unique, complicated set of possibilities and limitations. This study made it possible for me to confront some of my assumptions regarding advanced credit and the reality of college writing, and it also presented limitations that are not easily explained away.

Noticeably absent from the data analysis is discussion of race, class, gender, and privilege. The way that students see themselves according to these descriptors is undeniably important. However, these descriptors were not part of my research questions, and this study did not overtly seek to uncover the ways that the intersections of race, class, gender, and privilege

affected the participants. As a result, I did not pose questions that intentionally engaged these areas. Also, the participants' views on these descriptors did not emerge from the data collected. There are a few details regarding race, gender, class and privilege that are worth mentioning here, though.

For example, all the participants requested I use a female pronoun and feminine first name. Not all the participants present themselves as female in their academic settings. The decision for the participants to be known as female students in this study complicates the concept of gender presentation. Gender representation in an academic setting was not one of the main goals of this study, so I did not question the students' choice of pseudonym, nor did I ask the students to reflect on how their work might be perceived differently based on the name attributed to it.

The benefits of class and privilege seem to be another tacit assumption among the participants in this study. All of them attended high-ranking high schools. They attend well-known, prestigious universities, some of which include highly selective admissions and high tuition costs. Some attend college on academic scholarships, but the source of funding for others was not made clear. The universities they attend also allow unique opportunities for them. The focus of this study and the data the participants provided looks at what the students have done with the opportunities they have been afforded.

In our conversations, the participants sometimes mention being "lucky" to attend the high schools they did and to have the opportunities they have had. Details about what privilege might mean to these students in terms of educational opportunity or social opportunity did not emerge from the data. However, it is worth noting that both Advanced Placement classes and the International Baccalaureate program can be expensive. Schools that serve economically

disadvantaged students work to make these programs available to all interested students, but the reality is that many advanced credit opportunities are out of reach to students who cannot afford to pay for them. The students in this study were also among those who attended high schools that formed partnerships with local colleges and universities to provide advanced credit that is accepted at other institutions. Not all high schools have working relationships with higher education, and not all high schools have the resources available to bring dual enrollment opportunities to fruition.

Furthermore, small-scale studies such as this one may shed light on the ways that particular individuals navigate their own experience. I had the opportunity to work with these participants over the course of one semester. I do not assume that this one semester is or is not unique to their undergraduate college experience. The students who participated in this research study volunteered to share their experiences. It is possible that these students did so because they already felt confident and comfortable discussing writing. Perhaps the participants and I already shared assumptions and values concerning writing that were not explored in this study. As with any narrative research, the more time that is spent with participants and the more participants who become engaged in the research make the research findings richer.

CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Liz's story seems central to this study because she discusses overtly her understanding of writing as a means of self-discovery as well as a valuable educational tool, which is the focus of my research. Liz spent the spring break of her senior year in college in Arizona, where she listened to the stories of migrant workers. She is clearly emotionally affected by this experience and indicates to me that she has not yet processed all that she has seen and heard. She does share, though, that in reflecting on the people she met in Arizona, she believes

more so than any policy, people's experiences and people's stories are the only thing that can change the world . . . Stories get in our ears and they don't leave. Facts about crime rates and statistics may leak out, but not stories" (Participant interview).

This comment resonates with me as I reflect on my conversations with Liz, the other participants in this study, and my research for this project. Her remarks reveal a desire to connect with others in a meaningful way. Whether Liz discusses her classwork or social life, there is always an element of connection. She tells me she "hates chitchat," and that she wants to understand "what makes people tick" (Participant interview). This desire for personal connection is evident when Liz describes her writing, as well.

Doll (1993) posits that recursion is an integral part of the fabric of curriculum. Curriculum, in the post-modern sense extends beyond the walls of the classroom and beyond the boundaries of formal education. My conversations with Liz and the other participants, especially those who were former students of mine while in high school, allow me to consider recursion deeply. I've often envisioned recursion as circular: I may teach and reteach the same writing skill; my students and I may read the same poem or passage multiple times; and I sometimes get to teach the same students two years in a row. Such recursion is familiar to me, but admittedly, I have not always found it meaningful.

This research project challenged my assumptions about what makes a meaningful connection when it comes to writing experiences. The student voices in this chapter reveal that writing skills spiral over time. There is no real beginning to their identities as writers, nor is there clear evidence that writing progresses in a linear fashion. Instead, one of the themes that I observed in the participants' stories is the way in which writing skills and relationships with writing mentors meander. Participants report revisiting ideas over and over again, and they reflect on the ways that seemingly insignificant encounters may become important much later. In fact, reflecting on the participation of my own former students in this project reveals yet another layer of spiraling and recursion. This is the one opportunity I have taken over the years to inquire deeply about the effects of high school English classes on my students' future academic endeavors. Liz's story opens with a memory from one of our early encounters during her junior year of high school.

Liz: Discovering a Writer's Voice

"People's stories are the only thing that can change the world."

Liz was my student for two years as a member of my International Baccalaureate English class. I remember early in her junior year of high school, Liz stayed after class to talk about a paper she had written and on which she received a grade that was disappointing to her. She did not approach me about her grade, though. Instead, she wanted to talk about the work. She asked what was missing from her paper. She wanted to know how she could improve what was already there. We sat together and looked closely at the paper, revisiting her text and imagining other ways to explore the topic. I remember telling her that her writing was "almost there." As I attempted, inadequately I think, to describe what that meant, I don't remember what I said or what was lacking in her paper. I do remember her face lighting up as I described what an "A

paper” could look like. She said, “I *am* almost there. It’s going to be so exciting when I get there!” And then she left. That brief conversation made an impression on me, and my memory of it affects how I see Liz. She is simultaneously confident in her own mind and acutely aware of how she might fit in to the web of a classroom, a circle of friends, or a larger slice of society.

Emerging from Life as a Student

When we met for this project, Liz was preparing to embark on the next chapter in her story: life after college. In describing her current work of drafting cover letters to accompany a resume to potential employers, Liz says,

What I’ve discovered about senior year [of college] is that it’s all about marketing yourself and your experiences as a narrative and as an easily digestible narrative. Sometimes that’s empowering because there’s an arc, right? [In other words] here’s where I came from; here’s where I am; and here’s where I’m going. But it’s also dehumanizing because you have to reduce all of these complexities and all of these unknowns into this nice little 500-word sort of happy little text. [That] doesn’t feel good all the time (Participant interview).

The paradoxical language Liz uses strikes me. Constructing a brief narrative of the self in terms of experience, ambition and vision for the future can be “empowering” or “dehumanizing.” It can be either. It can be both. Liz seems to recognize the purpose in drafting a brief biography—she wants to be employed, and knows she must market herself to gain entry into the field she has studied. She is also keenly aware of the inadequacy of a brief narrative in providing any real entry into her own identity or realm of experience. I ask her to tell me more about how she negotiates such a task. How does she make meaningful her experience and ambition in a one-page introduction? She surmises that “Holding on to [her] voice and having fun with it” is an important step. Liz continues, laughing a bit, “I like to believe I’ve got some levity and I’m pretty funny every once in a while” (Participant interview). She reads to me from a recent biographical sketch she has written for a summer internship.

Liz, the curly-haired daughter of a Methodist Minister and a career Chemist, grew up in [the deep South]. She graduated from [high school] and, unwilling to let go of heat and humidity, she moved [away from home] where she studied Urban Studies and Art at . . . College. During her college days Liz loved leading the . . . College Crew Team, hanging out with some cool, justice-minded Presbyterians, working as a writing fellow, and finding ways to weave together art, storytelling, and meaningful listening to call attention to matters of racial justice. Liz dreams of continuing this practice long into the future and, more than anything, she dreams of aiding in the production of a socially-just world in which we might all be free. Most of [her] friends call her ‘Liz,’ which she thinks makes her sound way hip. One of her favorite pastimes is singing loudly (and off-key) during car-rides with friends. She dreams of one day having a large garden and a couple of cats of her own (Participant Interview).

Liz’s biographical sketch strikes me because it does seem to encapsulate and summarize Liz. Many of the big and small details are there, in a way: her curly hair, history of education, family, and commitment to social causes. The humor is there, too, as is the clarity and complexity I have come to know of Liz. But, she writes of herself in the third person. Her choice to do so reveals that as important as voice is to Liz, so is audience. “Third person was easier to step outside myself and say, ‘Ok, if I were to meet a stranger over coffee and share the totality of my experience in college, what might they regurgitate? What might they spit back? Would it sound something like that?’” (Participant Interview). She acknowledges that her brief biography is just a version of her narrative. It may be an acceptable version, but she recognizes that it is not a complete version, if such a thing could exist.

Moreover, she seems to grapple and ultimately come to terms with the necessity of such an abbreviated telling of her life story. Her awareness of audience and purpose reveal an ability to dwell in and embrace the kind of incomplete, partial narratives that qualitative researchers write about. She laughs when I ask how she has edited her experiences.

I don’t know. It’s a version, but by no means the most intimate version. There’s no hardship, like when I got hit by a car on my bike, or this break up or that break up, or this friend fight or that friend fight. I guess the editing revolves around the audience I’m writing for. If I were writing for my best friend, it would have been more intimate . . . But

this is for a future employer, so I am writing to summarize my skills and what would me a good employee (Participant interview).

Many of Liz's comments on her writing reinforce the idea that the audience and purpose for which she is writing is a primary concern. Her words echo the work of Donald Murray (1985), who asserts that students should be aware always of the effect of the whole piece of writing they construct. For Murray, writing is meaningful when it is written for a purpose beyond the classroom. Liz seems to have adapted her writing for multiple contexts and audiences. Moreover, her awareness of the place her writing occupies as evidence of her learning and perspective seems to be evidence of the kind of community Peter Elbow (2000a) imagines.

One idea that Liz revisits in our conversation is the idea of voice: the characteristics of a piece of writing that make it unique to the author. Specifically, she describes the importance of honing a unique voice whether she is creating a piece of visual art or writing a paper for class. For Liz, the work she does as a student, an activist and an artist becomes meaningful when she invests herself in the work. In our conversations, she acknowledges the need for courage and vulnerability in creating meaningful writing. Liz struggles a bit to find the words to define courage and vulnerability, but she acknowledges they are related concepts. For her, the two are "inseparable." Liz further talks through her understanding of courage:

The times I have been courageous and vulnerable are times when I am bearing witness to a personal trauma I have experienced or someone else's personal trauma. I think . . . [about] an experience you and I share is the speech I gave about Henry at our Baccalaureate ceremony [in 2014]. To kind of hijack that speech and make it about . . . something people were not talking about was courageous for me in that it was healing and that I could make public a personal wound. So . . . I think to be courageous is to put oneself in a position of discomfort with greater good. To put yourself on the line. To be vulnerable is, I guess, much the same. To be uncomfortable to share something personal with the intent of inviting others in. I think vulnerability is intrinsically linked to the audience. To be courageous has something to do with the trauma or the ideal that you fight for or against (Participant interview).

As one of top graduating seniors in her high school class, Liz was invited to be a featured speaker at her school's Baccalaureate ceremony. Liz chose to devote part of her speech to the memory of her classmate and dear friend Henry, who died from suicide during their senior year.

The extract that follows comes from the speech Liz gave at that ceremony.

About five months ago, my Henry memories took a turn I never thought they would. Sitting in the hospital with my crying friends didn't feel real, going to prayer services for him and his family didn't feel real, having an empty spot in my classes didn't feel real, and in many ways it still doesn't feel real. I was, and sometimes find that I still am, consumed by anger and sadness and just this overwhelming feeling of grief that consumes me from the inside . . . There's no explaining or justifying what Henry did. I still don't understand how this could have happened to a boy who had so much to love, who sought to repair, to build, to share, to laugh and to make others laugh.

What I do know is that for a second, just one second, Henry completely lost sight of what may very well be the most powerful thing we're granted as human beings, the impermanence of today and the sliver of hope that lives in tomorrow. Henry forgot what we've all managed to remember: that tomorrow doesn't promise to be any better than today, but it might be, and that the only way to find out is to get there. As long as we're alive, we've got tomorrow ahead of us. As long as we've got tomorrow, we have hope, and with that, we have reason to keep being brave (APPENDIX D).

Henry's death was a shock to many that knew him, and our grief clouded the spring semester. In both her speaking of Henry's death in her speech and her recollection of the speech to me in her interview, Liz affirms what she means by the courage and vulnerability that is so important to her identity as a writer. She reveals her grief and sadness in a public forum, "[making] public a personal wound," as she describes. In this moment, Liz foregoes tradition and possibly a banal approach to her speech in favor of vulnerability. She shares a bit of herself both to create an authentic expression of herself and to attempt to connect to her audience on a personal level.

Liz's memory of the event provides a similar glimpse into Liz's vulnerability and courage. In our interview, Liz chooses to share a personal memory that will have a public audience when I tell the story. She knows her words are recorded and that I will share and

manipulate what she tells me in my own writing. Still, she is candid when remembering the event. Her sharing of this story gives me permission to share her vulnerability. This cycle resonates with me as a pattern in Liz's story. She is keenly aware of her audience when she writes and seeks a relationship between writer and reader to create space and opportunity for interpretation and communication.

It is interesting that Liz defines courage and vulnerability in terms of trauma or pain. It seems as though those memories, like Henry's death, are the ones that are the most difficult and most important to her. Because they are difficult, sharing these memories requires courage and a greater willingness to let an audience in. Not all of Liz's writing or creative expression is filled with pain, though. As Liz describes her visual, mixed-media art, she makes connections to her writing process and the ways she uses humor, her own knowledge and interests to make meaningful all the work she does.

Elbow (2000a) encourages teachers to create spaces in their classrooms where students are heard and understood, not assessed and evaluated. For Elbow, (2000a) being understood through writing is not only about clearly articulating a topic and writing on it clearly. Liz's comments reveal she values writing as a means to understanding, not just a way to communicate understanding. In the next section, Liz reflects on her experience as a visual artist. As she does in writing, Liz sees her art as an extension of her identity and a way to communicate on her experiences. For her, "writing and art are inseparable" (Participant Interview). She tells me her "art is really dependent on text. Almost every piece of art [she creates] has text in it" (Participant Interview). As we talk, Liz freely moves between describing her writing process and describing her artistic creative process.

Creativity and the Connection between Art and Writing

A consideration of voice and audience becomes relevant to Liz's reflection on her practice as a visual artist. As we talk about writing, Liz refers to her art. Liz's description of her art feels similar to the way I understand the writing process. These actions seem to influence each other and help to inform our understanding of both of them, and of the artist/writer. Liz imagines a way to dig deeper into each other's experiences and narratives of their experiences to provide a richer, perhaps more meaningful connection among ourselves and with the creations we use to make sense of the world, like art or writing. She muses,

I sort of wish that we—the whole world—that we could take down a couple walls. [I could] say, “Look, my interest in mental health began when my friend committed suicide my senior year of high school, and that’s what made me really want to pursue social justice efforts.” If we sort of agreed that it all doesn’t have to be about marketing, and we could all be frank, all these little biographies would surely read differently, right? (Participant interview).

She describes attempting to create what she refers to as a “third space” between her art and the viewer of her art in which she is able to

elevate the mundane everyday object . . . to pull down . . . big questions of identity, shame, loneliness and create this weird space for people to exist in where the narrator is sort of confused, [asking] “Is this the object talking to me or the artist? Who is asking these big questions?” I think that third space necessitates knocking a couple walls down (Participant interview).

For Liz, the willingness to experience vulnerability, ambiguity and uncertainty is the most fruitful way to engage with art.

She hesitates when I ask if the assumptions are different when it comes to writing. Her hesitation leads back to a question of voice and the conflict between what students are sometimes taught to do in school in terms of their development of voice and awareness of audience and what ends up being true when those same students use writing to engage in more authentic

writing experiences in the “real world.” Liz approaches this question first as a student of art or writing—an interpreter of what has already been created. She decides that

unfortunately many people are told that they will never understand art and are never capable of getting it. Conversely, we are told—and this may be speaking from a position of privilege—that if you spend enough time with a piece of writing that you can get it. I think we were taught that you need more qualifications to “get” a piece of art than a piece of writing (Participant interview).

Her words make me wonder if our perceived accessibility of writing stems from the fact that we expect all students to be able to read and write proficiently, but we do not ask all students to engage the same way in other artistic media. We have certainly privileged the written word, but have we offered the same access to create and understand writing for all students? Clearly, Liz sees herself as someone who has been expected to read and to write with clarity. While she is able to articulate some of the conflicts and complexities she encounters in finding her voice as an artist, there does not seem to be the same struggle in her writing. It is difficult to see the two as different entities as Liz describes them, though, because both art and writing have been academic and creative endeavors for her throughout her educational experience.

There seems to be a conflict, though, between the expectations we have regarding art and writing. Are we taught as writers that you have to be clear? We see writers who are intentionally ambiguous as some of the “high art” of writing. Liz and I think about the texts we have shared—mostly through the selections I taught in my IB Literature class. She asks if there are pieces I would describe as particularly complex and inaccessible for some readers. We discuss the work of writers like William Faulkner, Cormac McCarthy, Arundhati Roy, who eschew linear narratives in favor of spiraling threads of plot explored in recursive patterns and often told by multiple narrators, not all of whom are reliable and none of whom can tell the “real” story.” We

talk about the story that exists between the lines and the possibilities of interpretation that exist even among seemingly simple, straightforward language.

Here, Liz remembers a story from her time in high school when we discussed Toni Morrison's (2008) novel *A Mercy*. She remembers her class completing a "superficial reading. And you encouraged us to find [more]" (Participant interview). She acknowledges that as seniors in their spring semester, they had probably gotten lazy and that day was "maybe the angriest [she'd] ever seen [me]" (Participant interview). We laughed at the memory of our mutual frustration, but Liz reflects on my role in getting her class to think beyond just what was on the page. She says, "Only through your push and the permission to be speculative and to make kind of crazy guesses did we ever enjoy the deeper meaning of *A Mercy*" (Participant interview). She recalls a discussion of characters in the novel who could be interpreted as queer.

I thought about it, but I didn't want to go there. But through that push [from a teacher] . . . we can play and have fun and misinterpret and still circle back and find meaning and maybe gain a little bit of clarity" (Participant interview).

I consider how this memory could be seen as pivotal to Liz's perspective in the class and as a reader of literature. That kind of risk she describes is hard. As a teacher, I know it's hard. Sometimes people need to be told that it's all right to be wrong and that wrong isn't even wrong, really. In this memory, Liz relies on my authority as a teacher to give her and her classmates permission to experiment and delve into possible interpretation beyond what is literally on the page. The tension of this risk is real to students like Liz and proves to be a powerful moment in Liz's discovery of herself as a student of literature.

In looking back on her experiences in high school, Liz reconsiders the effect of providing and denying spaces and opportunities for students to find their own voices. She reasons,

We have to consider the . . . diminishing of high school students' creative voice[s] with their . . . fear of having a creative read of text or fear of making that guess. Those two run

parallel. We tell high school students to have five paragraph essays, adopt this voice, and don't use first person. How are they ever going to be confident enough to say, "You know . . . I think I'm gonna make a guess here. It doesn't say so in the text, and I don't really have evidence, but something is telling me that Toni Morrison is exploring ideas of sexuality here." You can't do that if you're not allowed to have a unique voice. (Participant interview).

Here, Liz seems to recall the thoughts that led her and her classmates to think deeply about a puzzling passage of text. She works through the decision to abandon the "acceptable" methods of discussing a text: reading the language closely and supporting interpretation with evidence. In this abandonment, she feels free to take a risk, step beyond what is accepted and expected, to explore new ideas that may shed light on the text. This risk, both calculated and spontaneous, provides a glimpse into learning that we cannot often capture or plan. The process is emotional, sometimes revealing frustration and exasperation. However, such a risk can reveal new paths into a text, new meanings within the text, and possible ways of making meaning beyond the text. I appreciate that Liz refers to my role as both pushing the students into discomfort while giving them permission of offer alternative interpretations of the text.

This memory is related to the experiences Liz shares with me. We discuss the act of listening to a narrative and imagining how to place that story in a context of your experience and how to place your experience in the context of the story. Our conversation circles back to Liz's time spend listening to the stories of migrant workers in Arizona and how those narratives might influence the way she sees herself. We talk about the act of creating a narrative arc of experience and how to encapsulate experience in brief words. These are related experiences. We talk about the need to hear stories, not to reduce experience to a single narrative. At this point, Liz sketches briefly and holds up her notebook (APPENDIX D). She first points to a straight line. "We expect stories to go like this. I can't explain why, but this is how I envision a story working—maybe this is just my art brain" (Participant interview). She points to a second sketch, a circle

made up of smaller, connected circles spinning off from the larger one. “This is the way I envision a good story and a good sermon. I listen to my mom [who is an ordained minister] and have figured out what works” (Participant interview).

In listening to Liz’s story, I am struck by the ways her creativity, her spirituality, and her academic interests intersect. Her work seems to be an extension of an authentic part of herself. She seems present in every aspect of her work that she shares with me. She is honest, reflective, sometimes revealing the vulnerability she strives for in her art work. She ends our conversation by reflecting on this vulnerability: “Relationships and pieces of creative work are only valuable if they are vulnerable. I know that may be [single-minded], but . . . things feel worth it if there’s some degree of vulnerability in it” (Participant interview). Liz’s commitment to her work and willingness to make her work personal recalls her thoughts on her high school experience. My interviews with London reveal a similar commitment to personal integrity and the willingness to take a risk and become vulnerable on the journey toward writing with meaning and purpose.

London: Opportunities to Dive into Personal Interests

“I wanted to be the student whose paper [the professor] shows as an example the next year.”

London is an accomplished actor, a published writer, and a dual theater and business major at a large southern university. She completed the freshman composition requirement through dual enrollment in her high school senior English class. In our meetings, London draws on her experiences studying literary texts, working with writing mentors, and completing research projects as beneficial to her development as an academic writer. London’s diverse interests and myriad writing experience reveal an understanding of the interconnectedness between academic work and identity. London’s experiences, especially with regard to her work

in theater classes, provide an example of the kind of revision as re-seeing that Donald Graves (1983) imagines.

In an early focus group meeting, London reflected on ways that she has matured regarding her academic work. Not only has London come to recognize the importance of cultivating a relationship with her teachers, but she acknowledges that she is successful when she invests in her writing topics as well. She claims that a strong professional relationship with her professors “sparked [her] interest in doing well” because the professor is “someone who is on your side” (Focus group interview). London marks the beginning of this awareness in her dual enrollment English class:

We had free range of topics, and I picked something I ended up being really passionate about. I wanted to seek out that help [from the teacher]. I wanted to stay after class. I wanted to make this paper the best I could (Focus group interview).

Here, London situates herself between her teacher and the work to be done. As a participant rather than a recipient of the assigned work, London is able to assert her perspective and choices in her work. A commitment to writing pieces she is proud of is an idea that London refers to several times during our meetings. In our focus group, she and Calliope share a similar proud, competitive spirit as they approach writing.

Calliope: I strive to be that student where [the teacher says] “This is how you write that paper.”

London: Exactly!

Calliope: That’s what I’m trying to get to.

London: I want to be the student whose paper [the professor] show[s] as an example the next year.

Calliope: That actually happened to me and it was the greatest moment of my life!

London: I want to be that student (Focus Group Interview).

The students in the group laugh with them, but the desire to create meaningful work is serious to London. She tells the group she wants to “impact” the audience. Here, London

describes the way she sees herself as different from the peers whose papers she has helped edit over the years.

I don't think it's easy. Through college I've peer edited a lot of people's papers and it feels like [their writing is] just words on a page. There's no support or meaning or really a voice behind [the peers' words]. I think through writing so much I've been able to develop that voice through writing, and I want to be able to just affect people in a certain way so that they would read it and feel different at the end of it (Focus Group Interview).

London recognizes that investing oneself in the work makes the work meaningful and leads to better writing. She sees a difference in the writing she does for her theater classes, which she loves, and her history classes, which are required components for her degree.

[In history classes] I wasn't so invested in the topic . . . that was a struggle for me to write. But in theater—I have a background in theater—I know a lot about it so [writing] just means taking research and putting in a paper in a way I already understood . . . In history or science . . . I may have done the same amount of research, but . . . it's harder for me to make a connection with the topic (Focus Group Interview).

In a later interview, London describes work she is doing with a literary text for a theater class. Her willingness to invest herself in this work becomes an important component of the writing she does.

Interpreting Text and Finding Voice

The piece of writing London shares with me will not be a finished essay. Rather, she is working on a Shakespearean monologue from *Twelfth Night* to perform in a theater class (APPENDIX E). The purpose of the close study of the monologue is to interpret the language of the text and be able to offer a nuanced, rich performance of the piece. To perform and to understand this text, London explains, is to “focus on what the text actually says and then [find] meaning in other aspects, such as the choice of word or the rhythm of the sentence” (Participant Interview). Though the marked text may look chaotic, London describes the process she has used to dig deeply into the meaning of the monologue.

What [I] started with was going through and figuring out key words, looking those up, [determining] what I didn't understand. [Then], I had to come up with an interpretation or a translation into more modern language what I thought the point of the monologue was. For me that helped because as opposed to understanding the whole show, [I had to] break down literally line by line (Participant Interview).

The work that London has done on this relatively short piece of text is time-consuming and attentive to detail. She has meticulously marked and re-marked the text, noting the smallest details that might provide insight into an interpretation when the text is performed. By the time she has completed this marking exercise, London has paid attention to literally every syllable on the page. I ask London to consider how such meticulous marking helps make the text more meaningful.

[My class] talked about how bad Shakespeare [performances] come from people just not understanding what they are actually saying . . . We would go through and count syllables and realize that some lines have more than ten syllables. [That process] took us into new territory. So we scanned the whole document for syllables that we emphasized and ones we deemphasized. Even that was telling as to know what the point of the text is (Participant Interview).

The transition between looking closely at the technical aspects of the text and interpretation of the text is a creative act, in the way Doll (2012) imagines. Once London is able to mark the syllables and consider inflection and emphasis, then she is able to “go beyond that and add emotion and connection with the text” (Participant Interview). This work in molding and manipulating a Shakespearean text to find a unique interpretation and authenticity in performing the piece is Graves’ (1983) “forward vision” that could lead to “major breakthroughs” in writing (p. 160). The work that London does early in the process makes for a richer, more meaningful end product.

Collaboration and Publishing

London has used the process of revisiting text and continually adding to it, like she does with the monologue, in her own work. As part of her dual enrollment English class, London

wrote a paper on the portrayal of HIV-positive characters in young adult literature. This paper caught the attention of London's instructor, who sent it to a university professor. London, the university professor, and other professional writers collaborated on a chapter in a book on controversial issues in young adult novels. This process provided London an outlet to publish her work and the opportunity to collaborate with professional writers. London reflects on what she learned about writing and herself in this process.

I started with a completed paper. It had a beginning, a middle, and an end. But in a book, my chunk was two pages in the middle of a chapter. My final thoughts couldn't be the final thoughts. I met with the professor and we marked off areas that wouldn't be cohesive in the chapter and other areas that were good ideas to explore more deeply. I did more research and added to my paper. I read six or seven books to add one paragraph to my piece! It was one paragraph, but I was able to go in and tweak the rest (Participant Interview).

In this extensive revision process, London is able to provide insight into an academic collaboration. She realizes that this opportunity was special. She also realizes that she learned a valuable lesson about audience and purpose in this process.

[Cutting sections of the paper] had nothing to do with if the writing was good or bad. Just not everything was pertinent. It's just like research. Everything you find is not pertinent to your point. I put a lot of work into my paper and there were parts that I loved. But the chapter wasn't my chapter. I had to collaborate and fit in properly with other voices. Everyone has their own voice. [The reader] wants to read a chapter that is cohesive and flows and doesn't sound like two people shouting. You don't want to repeat what has already been said. Overall, it was a very interesting experience because [the co-writers] had so much more knowledge than I did. But [the process] elevated my writing. We all wanted to be singing in harmony. This was nobody's solo (Participant Interview).

For London, immersing herself in this writing project marked a moment in which she felt truly proud of writing a piece that demonstrated her knowledge, personal investment in the topic, and commitment to writing for an authentic audience and purpose. The inspiration for London's published project came from her advanced credit class and the opportunity her teacher helped her take. Molly's story below picks up a similar thread. She credits her involvement in the

International Baccalaureate program with providing her with opportunities to develop confidence in her writing.

Molly: High School Foundations and Future Success

“If you put in all your effort, you will really reap the benefits.”

During a focus group meeting for this study, Liz and Molly discuss the ways that the International Baccalaureate (IB) program prepared them for college work. Both pursued and achieved the IB Diploma, and the two share their struggles and reflections on their experiences.

Molly: I struggled my first semester [in college] . . . I felt comfortable in high school. It’s a whole other world in college! Everyone at my university did IB or AP. Everyone was on the same level. I felt very average. There were a lot of geniuses who have access to so many things. I just did IB [*laughs*]. I felt my math skills were not at the . . . same level as everyone else . . . I gained so many writing skills I didn’t necessarily use that freshman year. Maybe I should have done Higher Level Math. That might have prepared me. But I definitely do not regret what I took in high school.

Liz: I’m glad you mentioned feeling smaller than you did in high school. I think there’s definitely elitism and maybe a tiny bit of superiority complex in an IB group because you know you’re working very hard, maybe harder than your peers, and you do feel kind of like you’re on top of the world. At [my college], I feel like I’m one of the many; most had taken IB or AP. I was grateful to have taken it so I didn’t feel behind. If it didn’t give me an advantage, it definitely put me on a level playing field, which is a good place to be. As far as taking IB, I would do it again and again and again . . . It taught me a lot about work ethic and how much I’m capable of. I learned academic skills, but I learned I can do it. I’m so grateful for IB.

Molly: What I gained most from IB is confidence. I know I can sit down and focus and get things done and be diligent every day. I can really do anything I want if I can just be diligent and focused . . . I don’t think the whole credit hours or accolades are as important as the confidence you gain from it (Focus Group Interview).

Lessons Learned in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program

Molly attributes much of her success in college to the content and skills she learned through the IB program. Specifically, Molly reflects on her Community, Activity, Service (CAS) projects as being relevant to her success and confidence as a college student, stating

CAS forces you to think outside the box. That was so beneficial. [These projects] are the kinds of things that you get back only what you put into it . . . If you put in all your effort, you will really reap the benefits (Personal Interview).

Participation in CAS activities in high school allowed Molly to combine her organizational skills and academic interests while developing the communication skills that she continues to use.

CAS is a required component of the IB core. In this area of the IB Diploma Program, students must complete a number of projects that allow development of their creativity and community awareness. Though the CAS program requirements set parameters regarding the nature of activities and the time required to complete them, this component of the IB program is completely individualized. Students design and complete their own experiences under the guidance of a faculty member.

As one of her major CAS projects, Molly planned and hosted a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math day for middle school girls. This event was a one-day conference hosted by Molly and several of her peers. Local women from the STEM community were invited to speak to middle school-aged girls. To plan this conference, Molly worked on all facets of the project, from seeking administrative approval to host the conference to writing the conference agenda and arranging speakers (APPENDIX F).

One of the best parts of CAS, according to Molly, is the “experience of getting many people who are different . . . to help accomplish the same goal” (Personal Interview). Her involvement in projects like the STEM Day for Girls helped Molly learn “soft skills” that have been important in her career as a college student, such as “learning to talk to people in authority . . . communicating in a professional way” and managing complicated logistics (Participant Interview). The accomplishment of planning and executing an event for over 100 middle school girls is still a source of pride for Molly. She describes the event as something she is “passionate” about, and she sees projects like these as “the kind of thing that you get back only what you put into it . . . If you put in all your efforts, you will really reap the benefits” (Participant Interview).

She connects her experience with STEM Day for Girls in high school to her current involvement in her university's Society of Women Engineers club.

As a member of the Society of Women Engineers, Molly took charge of planning the chapter's trip to a national conference. She secured funding with the help of a faculty advisor, made reservations for lodging and transportation, and led 28 young women to a national conference meeting. Molly recognizes that this kind of activity carries a great responsibility. She laughs as she remembers the experience, saying she was "a mom to 28 girls for the weekend" (Participant Interview). Molly does seem to possess the ability to manage logistics and communicate with people in a way that is simultaneously meticulously focused and compassionate.

Molly's reflection on the importance of "soft skills," such as time management and collaborating effectively with peers and mentors, address a key component of the transition between high school and college (Guzy, 2011). To be successful in college, students must learn to manage their time without direct guidance from parents or teachers, and they often must develop ways to work with others who may not share their backgrounds, interests, or work habits. Other participants in this study express disdain for collaborative projects, indicating that producing work that relies on other people for completion is usually frustrating. Molly, however, seems to thrive in collaborative groups.

Though Molly describes herself as stubborn, she emphasizes her appreciation for opportunities that require her to work with people of different backgrounds, personalities, and opinions from hers. One theme I have interpreted in Molly's story is her commitment to collaboration with groups. Her college major classes require group work, and Molly seems to

thrive in this environment. She shares various examples of collaborative endeavors and seems to find a way to make all her experiences seem positive and worthwhile in some way.

Collaboration and Communication

As an industrial and systems engineering major, Molly's academic interests involve designing and implementing processes and systems that work efficiently for large groups of people. Molly describes projects such as designing shipping plans for manufactured goods, creating public spaces such as airport terminals that allow people to move through them efficiently, and imagining phone applications that allow people to network with other professionals in their fields. Her major academic interest emphasizes understanding the ways that individuals live as part of larger groups. Her course work in this field reinforces such collaboration and cooperation among individuals as well.

Molly was a graduating senior during the semester I conducted this study. As such, much of her course work emphasized multi-faceted projects that allow students to synthesize and develop all their skills as future industrial and systems engineers. The writing sample she shares with me is a group project in which Molly and her peers have designed a mobile application to connect college students and young professionals with experienced colleagues who could potentially be mentors in their field (APPENDIX F). The application includes social networking features and geographic locating features so that individuals can search for potential mentors anywhere in the world. In describing the idea, Molly integrates the technology of the application with interpersonal communication.

The app is location-based, which is interesting. A lot of people travel for work. Say they live in New York City and travel to Atlanta for a weekend. [The app] would notify you when someone comes to Atlanta, so if you want to meet them, you know what would be a good weekend to do so . . . Another thing that is interesting is the app does not just connect you with strangers. It helps you continue relationships with people you meet. It sends notifications to reach out to people you haven't seen in several months. People [in

my class] really liked this feature because they are not just looking for something to connect them to people. They can do that easily if they are brave enough. But the app can help them continue the relationship. That's what they need help with (Participant Interview).

The written report of this design project includes not only the description of her project, but elements of the brainstorming and focus group activity she completed in the initial stages of the project. The finished writing piece also includes writing that invites the reader to see the project in more depth than in a tightly constructed essay. Molly's group has organized their information in charts and graphs, and they have made use of visual prototypes of the kind of online platform they have designed. Not only does Molly need to demonstrate her knowledge and understanding of the course content, but the group projects she must complete require her to hone interpersonal and communication skills as well. Merging ideas regarding technology with human interaction is a recurring idea in Molly's interviews. Her primary concern is that her work brings people together. Guzy (2011) maintains that carrying out complex projects for a wide variety of audiences is crucial for success in college writing.

Molly describes her work with enthusiasm, and she balances her description of potentially frustrating aspects of working with groups of peers with more optimistic observations. No matter the task, Molly sees every opportunity as a chance to learn, to grow, to become a better student and engineer. It seems as though her peers recognize her enthusiasm. She describes her role in most group endeavors as follows:

Every single project I've been the facilitator. [Laughs] I have also been the person who keeps track of progress and makes sure everyone stay on top of things. I feel like I've changed so much in college, but I feel like I have the same personality. [Laughs] My function is the same. This is my niche, I guess. I enjoy [being the group leader] because I'm really organized, even in college. A lot of people at [my university] are really smart, but don't know how to have good time management (Personal Interview).

Through her experiences working with peers, Molly has learned to combine her organizational skills with her academic ones. She has become a trusted member of the groups with which she works, and her willingness to respect and consider the ideas and needs of others has proven valuable in her academic endeavors.

Like other participants in this study, mentors play a crucial role in the formation of good writers. For Molly, mentoring is a multi-faceted concept that has emerged throughout her academic career. Though Molly does not cite the specific advice of writing mentors, she does recall the role that experienced mentors have had on her academic experience as a whole. Moreover, Molly has mentored younger students herself, starting as far back as high school when she hosted the STEM Day for Girls conference. Molly tells me she “really value[s] close relationships” . . . You just never know when you will see a person again” (Participant Interview). Molly has come to see professional relationships as reciprocal and beneficial. She knows that a congenial relationship can help her career begin smoothly.

The most important mentor that Molly discusses is an engineer named Stephanie, an alumna from the university Molly now attends. At the time, Molly “got to eat dinner with her and interview her. I ended up getting an internship [at the corporation where Stephanie worked]. We would eat lunch together as coworkers . . . [Our relationship] really came full circle” (Participant Interview). Molly has stayed in contact with Stephanie, and she plans to work with Stephanie on her senior design project next semester. For many people, the senior design project is difficult. Students must seek out a company that is willing to give them a real-world design project to complete. Because of her relationship with Molly, Stephanie was willing and able to create a project for Molly’s design team. Not only does this opportunity alleviate the burden of

finding a sponsor, but also communicating with Stephanie will be easy. Molly looks forward to working with Stephanie.

We know how we operate and how we work. We are even having weekly phone calls. This is important because a lot of teams struggle with communication with their client. A person in industry doesn't have time to work with college students. [Early on] we were able to narrow down how we will communicate and that helps the project go smoothly (Participant Interview).

Not only does Molly value the presence of mentors in her career, but also she has come to learn to be a good mentor to others.

Molly offers her assessment of what makes a successful mentor. "You have to be a good listener. Being a good listener is not just listening to what they say, but listening to what they don't say. A lot of people don't just tell you everything. You have to figure out what their intentions are, what they are trying to do . . . It's not good for a mentor to give a mentee advice if they don't want to hear it or if it's not applicable to them. You can't treat different people the same way" (Participant Interview).

Molly's respect for others and willingness to put her own agenda aside seem to serve her well in her mentoring relationships. Additionally, Molly's approach to mentoring others seems to draw from the lessons she has learned regarding success in a challenging academic environment. She explains the importance of mentoring relationships in the following example:

I'm very interested in mentoring high school students on time management. They think I'm very on top of things. *[laughs]* Time [management] is a very important skill . . . I think mental health is a big issue. Time management [and] how to handle stress can help. If you can live a balanced life you will be fine. You have to be balanced (Participant Interview).

In her mentoring of high school students, Molly's role is fluid between leading and learning. She relies on her own research on time management and the advice of older mentors to share with the high school students. In doing so, she learns how to use scheduling templates to manage the

activities and work she must complete. She tells me that using and modifying the schedule templates gave her “skills . . . that were so beneficial” (Personal Interview). Molly’s work with mentors, peers, and younger students draws its success from her ability to navigate multiple roles within the relationships she cultivates.

Writing Process

Because so much of the work Molly has completed recently involves group writing, her writing process has evolved to accommodate the sharing of many ideas. The process she shared with me relies on extensive time spent in the brainstorming and idea gathering stage. Molly asserts that it’s “interesting to work with a group. We are all so diverse in our backgrounds, interests and skills. When we come together, it makes the project more complete . . . The mindsets [of group members] are all so different” (Participant Interview). Moreover, she admits that although she “can be stubborn in [her] own way of thinking, it’s humbling to know [she’s] not the only type of person in the world” (Participant Interview). Here, Molly’s writing process seems to have influenced her growth as a student and as a thinker. Such development will help Molly in her field, as she acknowledges

Industrial and systems engineering . . . is really focused because you are creating systems that will affect huge groups of people and just having this training and practicing how to [understand and work with others] will help me have a better perspective on what others are thinking. That’s good because the systems you build will not be used by the exact same groups of people. In the real world it’s about making a system for a large, diverse population to use (Participant Interview).

Molly describes how she and her group members learn to work together to design useful systems for diverse groups. A commitment to collaboration and diversity is evident throughout their writing process.

The initial part of the writing and design process, brainstorming, is often the most important step for Molly. Here, she reflects on the design project she shared with me (APPENDIX F). She and her group members create elaborate plans for their writing early in their process. Molly describes the way the group uses sticky notes to color-code categories that emerge from their brainstorming. This process is recursive in that the group reads, re-codes and re-categorizes ideas as necessary. Molly admits that this is “very difficult to do this alone,” but it’s a “really good way to digest our ideas.” (Participant Interview). Furthermore, the process of jotting every idea on a sticky note and physically placing it in proximity to other ideas “helps [the group] understand what problem [they] were actually focusing on” (Participant Interview). This process fosters communication and conversations, ideally allowing the best ideas to emerge.

In discussing writing with Molly, her enthusiasm and passion for her work is evident. However, unlike Liz, Molly does not address the need for individual voice in the writing she does. Instead, Molly and her group members seem committed to bringing forth only their best ideas in the most efficient way possible. Molly states that she has

learned that [good writing] depends on the audience . . . If you present to someone high up, like the CEO, they only want to listen to the summary. That’s why we have executive summaries in our papers. But if you know your audience is more hands-on and involved with the work, then you go into more detail . . . It’s better to keep everything short in a technical paper. You want to make it flow, but you also want to get your information out there efficiently (Participant Interview).

Synthesizing the key elements of her presentations so that only the ideas shine through is one way that Molly has learned to use writing successfully in her major. Honing this skill has also given her the opportunity to lead others and mentor their writing as well.

Lori: Discovering a Purpose for Writing

“My teacher said, ‘I know your writing. Let’s look at it [and revise]. I know you can do this.’”

Lori is a biology major completing her junior year of college at a large southern state university. She received advanced credit for college composition from a combination of dual enrollment credit and an Advanced Placement exam. Lori is eager to begin dental school once she graduates. Though she seems to enjoy her classes, Lori admits that majoring in biology leaves time for little else. Her original plan to minor in English proved too difficult with her current workload. Still, Lori is proud of the work she did in her advanced credit classes, and she refers to those experiences and the experience of the English electives she took as worthwhile endeavors. Like Molly, the opportunities that Lori had with mentors influenced her writing.

High School Experiences and Developing Confidence

Lori attributes her success as a writer to her high school English classes. She says her AP and dual enrollment classes “helped [her] build confidence as a writer” (Focus Group Interview). She credits the feedback she received from her teacher as helping to shape her skills, as “working one on one with [her teacher] and receiving feedback makes writing a lot more rewarding” (Focus Group Interview). She further explains the role feedback has played in her development as a writer.

After taking classes and writing so much, and getting feedback on the writing I was doing, everything came a lot more quickly . . . [My teacher] would circle a whole paragraph and say, “Read this. Does this make sense to you when you read this? Is this how you’d say this if you would write it again?” That was one thing that would trigger me to think of a better way for me to put my point across to readers (Focus Group Interview).

Lori elaborates on the impact that her teacher’s feedback has had on her as a writer. She tells a story of writing a response to a text by author Yiyun Li that proved to be a meaningful moment in her writing life.

[The assignment was] to elaborate or continue a text and present them to the author when she came to visit. Of course I wanted bonus points, so I chose one short story and made a continuation of it. It was just a two-page thing. I thought, “It doesn’t matter what I write; I’ll just put something down.” I was chosen to read my work in front of the author! Something positive that came from that was that [my teacher] said, “I know you wrote this quickly. I know your writing. Let’s look at it [and revise]. I know you can do this.” Just having that relationship to say, “I know that’s not your best work. Let’s push it forward because it can be something great.” And it actually turned out really well. Initially I didn’t have the confidence to do something like that. I know that wouldn’t have happened here because we don’t have that kind of opportunity in college (Focus Group Interview).

This experience marks an important component of Lori’s high school dual enrollment experience. The interchange between Lori and her high school teacher reveal the kind of trusting relationship that Graves (1985) and Elbow (1973) suggest are necessary for rich writing environments. Moreover, Lori’s reflection on the variety of experiences afforded to her by her dual enrollment class suggests that it is possible for students to mature as writers before they enter college. Guzy (2011) is critical of the quality of writing that is acceptable in many high school writing classes. Lori’s experience contradicts that observation. Lori’s teacher singled Lori’s piece out because he knew the quality of work she could produce. Lori mentions that she would not have had such opportunities in college; rapport with a high school teacher often means valuable individualized attention to a student’s writing.

Writing Like a Scientist

The confidence and trust that Lori developed in high school has carried into her college-level work. As a biology major, her writing has changed over the years. No longer is she writing creative or personal pieces for her classes. These days, her writing takes the form of lab reports and research summaries in her science classes. These classes require highly sophisticated technical writing skills that Lori admits did not always come easily to her. She credits her freshman-level biology lab courses with helping her develop these technical writing skills.

I tested out of the biology lecture, but I'm glad they didn't let me test out of the labs. Even though we were pretty much writing about nothing, we had to figure out how to write. I went through a lot of bad reports [that] I thought were fine, but I guess not. [laughs] [I learned] to be careful about wording when talking about accepting or rejecting a hypothesis. You say the word "prove," and everybody gasps! You can't *prove* anything in science. What comes instinctively now is taking data and explaining every bit of [it]. When I first started, I assumed it was common sense that you would infer, but no. You can't just infer that the reader understands. You have to be clear right down to every decimal point. Now, it's easier to explain the reason we're either rejecting or failing to reject the hypothesis. I have an easier time writing out every little detail. I have learned to go back and think a few more times. I go back to the data to see if I can find more and more detail to add in my writing (Participant Interview).

When I ask Lori to visualize her writing process in a drawing, her concept is mostly linear (APPENDIX G). However, her words reveal that her process is, in fact, quite recursive. She describes how she has learned to use the data she has collected, how she collaborates with her lab partners, and how she completes her reports out of order so that she can review all the necessary information before drawing conclusions and writing summaries.

Though many of Lori's writing skills have evolved through trial and error, she attributes some of her learning to specific tasks she has been asked to do by her college instructors. In her science classes, Lori has been given specific instructions, including templates, to help guide her writing. In addition, she has been required to read a significant number of published scientific articles, so she has come to recognize what components make a good scientific piece of writing.

Lori explains that in many of her early science labs, she was asked to perform experiments that seemed "random" for the sole purpose of practicing how to write a report and use the software that would help analyze the data. She refers to a piece of writing from one of those early courses (APPENDIX G).

We were given a template. The professor filled in most of it. The goal of the first page is to use software to form graphs and use the calculations in the software to read the data. We were given the data and needed to input it correctly. We put the graphs to make sure we actually did the work. We were expected to write the discussion section in paragraph form. I didn't have to refer to anything [like a model or template]. In science writing, the

discussion always looks the same. You talk about hypothesis, the errors in the experiment, what the data means for the hypothesis. (Participant Interview).

Because so much of scientific writing in Lori's field relies on both the accuracy of the experiment and the predictable form of the writing itself, she sees that completing class activities that have required her to practice correct formatting and correct verbiage have been helpful. Now that Lori has taken more advanced classes and has more experience with reading and writing in her field, she is able to articulate what makes good scientific writing. She says that the best science writing she has encountered is "readable" (Participant Interview).

If I have no idea about the topic, but I can still follow along, that's what good science writing is. [Good articles] won't have a lot of science-based words. Even if [the authors] throw around words you wouldn't know, they define them. They make it easier to read, not just for people in their field, but for everybody. Another thing is they don't skip around. Often in science writing, [authors] skip around in the methods section. I appreciate when [the article] is chronologically organized (Participant Interview).

Lori cites receiving detailed, personal feedback about her writing as a key aspect of her high school experience, just as Liz and London discuss. She explains that in those feedback sessions with her teacher, Lori learned how to write confidently and with purpose. She takes those skills into her science class as well. Science writing, is unique, Lori explains because

a lot of it is not getting your point across. It's using the right words to be able to get exactly what you mean across. There is less room for play [in science writing]. You have to use the exact words. [The writing] has to sound like what you would see in a science paper (Focus Group Interview).

She has also come to appreciate the feedback she has received from her the Graduate Assistants in her classes. As she has grown in ability and confidence, Lori recognizes that different mentors can provide unique kinds of help to her.

I think when I started college, I didn't like that all instructors were graduate assistants, not professors. This semester, I have a good GA; she's approachable and close to my age. Sometimes you're embarrassed to ask a stupid question to a professor who knows all about the subject. [The GA] says, "Let's figure this out together." She's more like a peer,

but I have received good feedback because this is her field, and she knows a lot (Participant Interview).

Though the technical aspects of Lori's writing are very different from what students might encounter in a high school or college English class, there are key similarities. Continued practice and focused feedback are as important in science and technical writing as they are in more traditional literature and composition classes. Lori's writing might be quite different from Liz's or London's, but her commitment to write and revise until her words are precise and unique remain the same. Honing a writer's voice in technical pieces is different from what Liz describes in her essays, but it is still necessary to use language to make an impression and assert oneself as knowledgeable and competent in any college major.

Paige: Confidence and Experience

"College requires you to work holistically, comprehensively."

Lori's commitment to precision and accuracy in technical writing is reflected in Paige's narrative as well. Like Lori, Paige is a biology major who graduated high school four years ago and is currently a graduating senior at a large state university 600 miles away from home. She has been accepted to two of the medical schools for which she has applied, and at the time of our interviews, was uncertain where she would attend next semester. Paige graduated high school with the IB diploma, and she describes herself in the following way:

I'm a recent graduate of [college] with degrees in biology and psychology. In the fall, I will be headed to medical school to hopefully become a doctor one day! My favorite color is purple, I love dogs, and I drink around 5 Diet Cokes...a day. As a science major, I have tried to escape English classes like the plague. I've always enjoyed reading but writing has always been a chore for me - it doesn't come naturally like it does for many. That said, I worked diligently in high school on improving my writing and I experienced the fruits of my labor in my (singular) college English class (Participant Interview).

In our interviews, Paige tells me she has always known she has wanted to be a doctor, and she entered college with a specific plan in mind. As a high school student, Paige had the opportunity

to take both dual enrollment and IB classes. Since the dual enrollment classes came with additional fees and since the colleges to which she applied did not accept those credits, Paige opted not to take advantage of the DE credit. She received credit for the same courses because of her IB scores, though, and was able to place out of required math classes and all but one required English class. Like Liz, Paige appreciates the depth of content knowledge and range of writing experiences afforded to her in the IB program.

Path To College: The IB Diploma

In discussing her experience as an IB student, Paige reflects on the following:

IB prepped me more for the test-taking style of college. [IB] taught me to study earlier, which was different from my friends in college who took AP classes. AP was more like studying to a test, which is not how college really is. College requires you to work holistically, comprehensively. That aspect of IB is super helpful. I learned how to study in junior year [of high school]. I'm still learning how to do that, by the way [laughs]" (Focus Group Interview).

In college, Paige has elected to take the honors option for many of her classes, which require additional reading and lecture attendance outside of class and often ask students to complete additional writing assignments. Though the writing component of these classes could be significant, Paige claims that the experience did not necessarily give her an advantage in her science classes. She tells me she learned to "write a reflection in an hour, but what [she] learned in the [additional] lectures had nothing to do with class" (Focus Group Interview). Paige's criticism of her IB experience comes from her science classes.

She, like Lori, sees writing as a bit more compartmentalized than some may assume. Her high school classes did not privilege writing in the sciences. As a result, she describes herself as "great at analyzing in English, but I'm going to medical school. We didn't learn how to read science [writing]. That's probably not necessary in high school, but it's an entirely different world to write in science" (Focus Group Interview). Reading and writing for science is a skill

that Paige has developed since starting college, and she has come to appreciate the benefits of these skills as she has matured as a student.

I would say now I actually prefer to have a writing test. In my cell biology class, I have done way better on the written assessments this semester than I did on multiple choice [tests]. I have learned better how to articulate what I was thinking. I think [writing] is a truer test of my knowledge than multiple choice” (Focus Group Interview).

Paige has discovered that her science classes require a specialized style of technical writing.

During her undergraduate years, Paige has had to write lab reports, contributions to scientific papers, and responses to test questions. She attributes the expertise of mentors and the availability of writing models to her success as a technical writer.

Growing Confident in Technical Writing

Recently, Paige worked as a research assistant with a doctoral student on a concussion study at her university (APPENDIX H). This project studied the affects of head trauma on student-athletes. Since this work is part of a larger study expected to be published for the scientific community, Paige must contribute writing that is technically sophisticated. She describes the doctoral student with whom she works as a “great teacher” who “had to learn [technical writing] on her own” (Focus Group Interview). Because Paige’s mentor struggled in the past with her writing, she has been able to provide valuable feedback on Paige’s writing.

Paige describes the relationship with her mentor as “collaborative.” She describes their writing process as follows:

She will break down [the writing tasks] with me. Every paper I write has to go through seven or eight drafts before it goes to the supervising professor. A lot of [the writing] is collaborative; she sees issues in my writing and says, “Here’s how to address it.” I’ve spent a lot of time (Focus Group Interview).

Working on this extensive research project has helped Paige become attentive to detail and precise word choice in her writing. She uses those skills in the writing she must do in her science classes as well.

In addition to trusting the guidance of a writing mentor, Paige also cites her professors' writing models as integral in her development as a writer. Many of the science classes she has taken require written exams, in addition to multiple choice assessments. She has determined that each of these kinds of assessments require her to demonstrate different skills.

Multiple choice tests are just recall. You can recognize a phrase in the question that would help you pick the right answer. But on [short answer] tests, if you don't know a single word of the question, you could miss five points all together. You have to be able to understand [the concept] at a deeper level and also be able to explain it. We are learning about lots of different mechanisms right now. You have to not only be able to say x causes y, but you have to know how x causes y. You must be able to explain in words how the mechanism works which is proving to be more of a challenge than in my past classes (Participant Interview).

Part of the way that Paige prepares for challenging writing assessments is to study the samples her instructors provide. She explains that the instructors give the students a set of sample questions after every lecture that include an outline of the material that would go into answering each question. Paige explains that the instructor "won't ever write out an answer, but [the students] have a breakdown saying x will get you one point; y will get you two points" (Participant Interview). In this manner, the students are prepared to know the level of detail they will need to provide to score well on the assessment.

To prepare answers to the sample study questions, Paige relies on a group of study partners and a recursive process of writing. She and her study group try to "break up everything [they are] learning" to "talk out possible questions" (Participant Interview). She claims that multiple choice items would be much easier to answer. Short answer questions require the students to rely on their own understanding of the concepts and their ability to articulate that

understanding quickly and efficiently. To prepare for her tests this semester, Paige relies on rehearsing possible written answers.

I'm constantly thinking. Even if I know how a mechanism works in my head, I write it out and read it again as if I'm my teacher reading it. If [my response] is not 100% clear, then I clarify each little part" (Participant Interview).

Paige's process of recursion allows that she will not only remember the content she is required to know, but that she will also be able to express her knowledge in clear, precise language in a timed exam environment. The idea that writing must not only be clear and precise, but it must also convey some aspect of the writer's voice and perspective is one that recurs among the participants, no matter their background. Though Paige's writing is primarily concerned with accuracy rather than interpretation, she still expresses the desire to make her writing her own.

Calliope: Negotiating Discipline-Specific Writing

"My professor said, 'Your writing is amazing! Where did you learn that?' I said, 'High school.'"

Calliope is a junior at a private southern university. She studies sociology and aspires to attend law school after graduation. Calliope tells me she changed her major from pre-med to sociology because she "just didn't care" about the material in her science classes. She has come to embrace the ambiguities of her liberal arts classes. She, like Liz, is happier in academic classes where she can interject her opinions and perspectives in her writing. As an IB Diploma graduate, Calliope attributes the challenging workload she completed in high school and the requirement to write in every academic subject area to her success in a rigorous college environment. She describes her coming to use her personal interests as a source of writing inspiration below.

At [my university], you have to write. No matter the class, you have to write. No matter the assignment, you have to write. So [a science professor] gave me this bland topic—at least to me it was a really bland topic—and I thought, "I hate this." I had to find something I could connect to on a personal level . . . It was in a cell biology class. I had

to write about genetic disorders and my having albinism was the only way. There was no other topic I could think of that would push me to be passionate about it, and I think that's what made the difference so I could get through writing it (Focus Group Interview).

Early in her college career, Calliope recognized the need to take a risk and explore an academic topic by using her own experience.

Calliope's confidence in making her writing unique echoes Liz's story. Liz remembers entering college feeling confident in her ability to write and to work through difficult material. She reflects on her experience as an IB student, remarking "something that IB did—and I mean this in the best possible way—is that it broke me down." Participation in the IB program was emotional and "humbling" for Liz. She continues, considering that "[I] can always be better that there is always room to grow" (Participant interview). Though Liz felt as though her IB experience prepared her to engage with complex material in college, she also feels as though her experience as a writer gave her somewhat of an advantage over her college peers. She indicates that "IB challenged [her] in a way [she] had never been challenged," particularly with regards to writing. Because of her experience, Liz had developed a work ethic that "acknowledged that part of the writing process is editing, going back and rewriting. I went to college already knowing that you have to rewrite; you have to edit. You can't pull [good writing] out at the last second" (Participant interview). Developing habits that prove successful in college is one benefit that research on the IB program echoes (Conley et al., 2014; Culross and Tarver, 2011; Shaunessy-Dedrick et al., 2014). This research indicates that students, irrespective of their IB scores, report being well-prepared for the demands of college-level work, including writing.

Developing confidence in writing

Calliope's recollections of her IB experiences reveal a similar pattern as Liz's narrative. One key component in Calliope's development as a confident writer is her increasing desire and

ability to trust her own opinions. Calliope remembers the process of writing the Extended Essay in the IB program as pivotal to her becoming more confident as a writer. The Extended Essay is an independent research paper that is a requirement of the International Baccalaureate Diploma. (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2018). Students work under the guidance of a faculty advisor to complete academic research on a subject of their own choice. The Extended Essay process

was a huge task as a writer. It was hard as a researcher. [The process] taught me to dig through sources first. I had to pick out what I wanted to use, understand the sources, then write . . . [The Extended Essay] skills serve me well to this day. Writing long papers is not daunting to me anymore. I can manage that. It's taken away the anxiety of writing a big paper (Participant Interview).

The Extended Essay afforded Calliope with the chance to manage several important skills at once: locating and using sources, developing an argument, and writing with authority and expertise. As a liberal arts major, Calliope draws on these skills frequently and feels confident among her peers to express herself in writing.

While she attributes the beginning of her confidence as a writer to her days in the IB program, Calliope has also determined that success in her major courses depends on finding a way to have “a strong point and to consider opposition . . . It's necessary to make your point, but you have to see the other side” (Participant Interview). She attributes her IB course with teaching her valuable academic and interpersonal skills.

[In IB] I learned how to use language; how to annotate text and see the structure of works so you know how to navigate them. [I learned] how to manage my time. Professors don't care if you have four other papers due . . . Communication with professors is a learned trait. It comes organically for some, but not everyone knows how to approach their teachers . . . IB teachers take the time to discuss and review and edit. They help you understand on a personal level (Participant Interview).

Calliope's remarks show a connection between academic learning and personal maturity. As she has grown as a student and as an individual, she has come to consider personal investment in her

work as necessary. In addition, Calliope values the teachers who have spent time with her so that she may gain confidence and experience in academic writing. She concludes that advanced credit opportunities are valuable to incoming college students. Calliope also surmises that there “needs to be a more deliberate kind of a system in terms of what a freshman college class is” (Participant Interview). In other words, she imagines a system in which there is communication among students, high school faculty and college faculty to determine those skills and opportunities that will truly benefit young college students.

Advanced Credit Levels the Playing Field

Calliope’s early impression of her college instructors was that “the professors think you’re stupid . . . They give you easy stuff [to write]” (Participant Interview). She recalls being told that technical writing matters, such as writing from a first-person perspective, were acceptable in college. For Calliope, who worked in high school to develop an academic voice, this was a surprise.

[Professors told us] you can use “I;” you can use first person, second person, it doesn’t really matter. Except for it does kind of reflect in your grade . . . I had friends who fell into using non-formal writing and would get 78s and 80s on their papers. I was taught how to write without using “to be” verbs and not to use first person in high school, and I would consistently score 97s and 98s. And that’s with all my papers, not just English. Psychology, sociology, any random elective where I had to write. I would get those grades across the board for the first two years [of college] . . . I would get good grades because I used proper language, and I could express my ideas concisely, efficiently, and effectively (Participant Interview).

Unlike Liz and Molly, who see the lessons learned in high school as necessary to succeed in their college environments, Calliope sees the skills she developed in high school as providing her with an advantage over her peers. Though Calliope was exempt from taking a college freshman composition course, she elected to take it because “[she] figured it would be an easy four-hour credit” (Participant Interview). Moreover, Calliope says

I missed reading just to read or having something to read for. I missed [writing about novels] so I took the class to learn about different aspects of writing—comparative, persuasive papers. Those gave me a definitive look on how to approach different kinds of papers (Participant Interview).

Calliope values the experience she gained in this class, as it gave her the opportunity to try different modes of writing and to practice writing longer papers than she had before in other college classes. She proudly recalls her professor's praise of her writing. "My professor said, 'your writing is amazing! Where did you learn this?' I said, 'High school.' So, yeah, IB definitely helped me in college!" In reflecting on the connection between her high school and college writing experiences, Calliope cites not only the skills she learned in English class, but also the requirement to write in all academic subjects as integral to her success.

An Emerging Work Ethic

As an IB Diploma student, Calliope learned to write for various audiences and purposes. She recalls being frustrated in her high school history class because she attempted to write "something [her] teachers wanted to hear" (Participant Interview). She tells me she became

sick of wasting my time thinking, "What do they want me to do?" and I just started writing what I wanted to. I started getting better grades from that. I think I learned by my grades that you write well when you pay attention to what you want to write (Participant Interview).

The moment when Calliope shifts from trying to guess what her teacher wants to investing herself in her writing topics is important to her development as a writer, particularly in the ways she has come to adapt her writing to suit different audiences and purposes. She attributes her growing abilities as a writer to maturity and a better understanding of herself as a student. Early in her college career, Calliope changed her major from biology to sociology. This shift marks a change not only in the academic content Calliope became interested in, but also in the way she preferred to demonstrate her knowledge and understanding of course material.

Calliope sees that she has changed significantly since high school. She recalls “hating” her science classes in college (Participant Interview). She describes her experience with math and science tests as “rigid” and dependent on “black and white thinking” (Participant Interview). Calliope says she has come to appreciate “there are always gray areas and a little confusion” (Participant Interview). Because Calliope has come to embrace ambiguity and uncertainty, she has sought college courses and a college major that allow for less rigid ways of thinking and expression. Calliope describes this shift in thinking as follows:

Academically, I’m comfortable in writing and can use writing to express myself. I prefer to write a paper or write a short answer on exams. I hate multiple choice [tests]. It’s completely different from how I was in high school . . . Liberal arts call for understanding the material. Knowing the concepts, like existentialism or utilitarianism, means nothing. You have to maneuver within those concepts to show who they affect in society and how they work in your culture (Participant Interview).

Coming to learn how to express her positions in writing and having opportunities to do so have allowed Calliope to hone a confidence in her writing that is a source of pride and success for her.

Back to the Beginning

While it’s impossible to imagine a starting point of any narrative, my relationship with Liz and the earliest writing memories she shares begin in high school. She recalls enjoying the process of researching and writing her Extended Essay, calling it the “first big piece of writing that [she] was obsessed with” (Participant interview). The title of Liz’s Extended Essay was “Were the charges made against Alger Hiss by Whittaker Chambers legitimate?” She approached the topic as an historical analysis of whether or not Alger Hiss was a Soviet spy working within the United States government. She remembers a summer spent reading everything she could on her topic, “immersing” herself in it. She laughs, recalling her faculty advisor’s admonishment that she had “told her everything except Alger Hiss’ favorite ice cream flavor,” but that writing the Extended Essay was “the first time [she] saw how fun writing can be . . . if you make it

personal and find a way to commit to it” (Participant interview). Liz elaborates on the “fun” part of writing. For her,

It’s so satisfying to feel like an expert on something and to feel . . . like [she] could field questions from anyone . . . It was nice to be 17 and feel like I knew more [on this topic] than 98% of the people in the world (Participant interview).

Liz describes feeling proud of her accomplishment and proud of her willingness to “[make] the leap and read everything” (Participant interview). For Liz, completing the Extended Essay project afforded her a balance of freedom and guidance that led to confident completion of an independent project. Though she describes this experience as the first of its kind in her academic career, the Extended Essay and the work she did as an International Baccalaureate Diploma candidate paved a solid future for her as an undergraduate college student.

It seems as though Liz attributes at least some of her success in her International Baccalaureate class to the opportunities she had to choose the direction her writing projects took. For Liz and the other participants, the ability to manipulate a writing topic to suit their own interests allowed them to develop a unique writing voice and a means to communicate with others regarding issues that are important to them. Because these students were so personally invested in their coursework in major projects such as the Extended Essay, they worked hard to ensure that the writing they produced reflected the enthusiasm they had for topics. That personal investment and enthusiasm has carried through to each participant’s college work. Each has chosen a major area of academic interest that allows them to integrate several areas of their lives and pursue work about which they feel passionate. The degree of personal investment these participants show for their writing assignments might not be typical or necessary for success in advanced college programs or in undergraduate studies. However, these habits certainly seem to have served the students I studied well.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Contributions to the Field

In a 1993 work, William Doll suggested a redefining of curriculum around a new set of four R's. Noting that reading, writing, and arithmetic are not sufficient ways to consider the profundity of what goes on in a classroom and what rightfully should go on in a classroom, Doll (1993) proposed his own essential components of curriculum: richness, recursion, relations, and rigor. Though these are inevitably interconnected and not intended to be organized in a hierarchy of importance, perhaps a fresh look at Doll's four *R*'s, particularly rigor and recursion, provides a way to imagine transforming current curricular practice, particularly as it pertains to advanced credit courses.

The fourth of William Doll's (1993) *R*'s, rigor, suggests that curriculum must be above all transformative. In other words, curriculum requires that a learner continually explore and look for patterns and connections among the content with which he or she engages, thereby changing, transforming his or her perception of the world. Such active engagement transforms the learner as well in an ever-changing, ever-emerging relationship with content and one's understanding of content. Doll's version of rigor indicates that learners are active creators of curriculum, continually defining and redefining the world around them to articulate an understanding of it. Rigor, combined with recursion, invites learners not only to make sense of the world around them, but it also encourages them to revisit problems and topics in search of new understandings and new connections. This postmodern iteration of curriculum is uniquely specialized to an individual learner's needs and desires, and it urges both learners and teachers to consider multiple possibilities and opportunities for learners to create their own paths to understanding concepts and the material to be mastered. In an educational context in which students are reduced

to ACT scores and in which high schools push college content in order to stay competitive in a changing educational market, Doll's work is more important than ever.

The findings of this research study support the assertion that advanced credit opportunities, even those in composition classes, are worthwhile endeavors for high school students. Though many studies (Adelman, 2006; Maruyama, 2012; Shaw, Marini, and Mattern, 2012; Ackerman, Kanfer, and Calderwood, 2013; Giani, Alexander, and Reyes, 2014) indicate the benefits of advanced credit for content-based courses such as math and science, these participants' stories also show that achieving advanced credit in writing is helpful in college, too. The narratives collected here reinforce previous studies that support the benefits of holistic programs, such as the International Baccalaureate Diploma. However, all the participants in this study describe themselves as confident writers who have developed an individual approach to composition. The work ethic they practiced in challenging high school classes allowed them to enter college prepared for heavy reading and writing loads. Moreover, each participant indicated that she received valuable help from an instructor or mentor that was instrumental in developing good writing skills.

Taking advanced credit courses helped these students form relationships with writing mentors, such as their teachers, published authors, and sometimes peers. As a result, they were able to seek out similar arrangements in college. The participants in this study state that they were able to take ownership of their own writing. They were able to pursue projects that sparked their interests and passions, and they developed a commitment to write from a unique perspective in their own way. The findings of this study show that these participants have learned to navigate the tension among writing for various audiences and purposes. Such negotiation is a

sign of mature, sophisticated writing (Culross and Tarver, 2011; Guzy, 2011; Tinberg and Nadeau, 2011; Yancey and Morrison, 2011; Shaunessy-Dedrick et al., 2014).

In terms of the process each student employs when writing, this study reveals that all the participants value writing for an authentic purpose and audience, and they all see the writing process as recursive. Because they have sought out writing projects or approaches to writing projects that are personally meaningful, each participant describes the necessity of researching, writing, and repeatedly returning to the research and the writing drafts to make sure the final product is satisfactory. Grade criteria matter for these students, but so does the desire to show their knowledge and expertise in a unique way.

Even participants like Molly, who concede that her ideas do not always work for a group project, recognize that good writing can come from academic endeavors. Though Molly's projects are collaborative at every level, her ability to organize the work and assist her group members to revise their writing into coherent, succinct prose demonstrates the personal investment she has in her work. Likewise, Paige and Lori are able to meld their knowledge of technical, scientific writing and their interpretations of data in their lab reports. The attentiveness to detail and desire to produce quality work shows these participants' commitment to their writing.

The focus group meetings and individual interviews reveal that the participants feel confident as writers and seek opportunities to write. For students like Paige, who describes herself as avoiding writing in high school, writing has become crucial to her learning. Calliope also noticed a change in her preferences between high school and college. Both of these students were reluctant writers in their advanced credit classes, but both of them now embrace writing as a richer, more thorough means of demonstrating understanding of their academic concepts. Liz

and London have chosen college majors that depend on personal interpretation and written work in their class assessments. These participants embrace the ambiguity that comes from interpretive writing and have sought out avenues for publication outside the classroom. Liz writes sermons as part of her service as a fellow in the Presbyterian Church, and London worked for a time on her university's newspaper staff.

Reading these students' stories provide educators with a glimpse at what happens to high school students after graduation. Their stories provide insight on how writing skills are valuable in concrete ways outside of English class. In fact, the only criticism that these participants shared regarding their advanced credit courses is that there was not enough writing in all academic content areas. Perhaps one assumption that this work challenges is that students outside the liberal arts will not have to demonstrate sophisticated writing skills in college. That is not the case. Liz, London, and Calliope entered college as liberal arts majors. They were prepared and expected to write well throughout college. Paige, Lori and Molly came to understand the valuable place that writing occupies in their fields somewhat later. Nonetheless, the stories of these participants provide insight on how writing skills are necessary in many areas beyond the English classroom.

Reflections on Advanced Credit Opportunities

Evidence on dual enrollment and other advanced credit opportunities for students cite the popularity of the programs and the financial benefits of many programs. Having students earn college credit in high school is a model that seems to be here to stay. Additionally, research on dual enrollment indicates that individual student behaviors and habits—not just their grades and test scores-- correlate to success in dual enrollment classes and often future success in college. In fact, none of the participants in this study revealed their ACT scores, their AP or IB test scores,

or their grade point averages. In their narratives, the participants measure success in terms of their own confidence and in terms of the feedback and response they receive from the readers of their writing.

In that regard, there is a growing body of research that positions graduates of the holistic International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, with its emphasis on interdisciplinary learning and student behavior, as some of the most well-prepared and well-suited for advanced academic work in the university setting (Bergeron, 2015; Conley et al., 2014). Similarly, AP students who have achieved high scores on their exams have also proven themselves successful in college classes. However, the IB and AP programs, no matter their positive attributes, are nevertheless inaccessible to many students. Not every high school offers the programs, and the cost of registration exam fees may be prohibitive to many students. Furthermore, not every student is interested in the challenges of the IB diploma or the rigors of an AP class. For these reasons, dual or concurrent enrollment opportunities provide a much more accessible avenue toward advanced college credit.

Further research could explore ways to make high school classes, particularly those which offer advanced college credit, places of inquiry and critical thinking. Further research could also study the kinds of support dual enrollment students receive, particularly as younger students find themselves in higher-level college classes and are asked to specialize and declare majors early in their college careers. In terms of how we teach dual enrollment, nearly every study cites collaboration and support among high school and college faculty as valuable, yet there is not much research on the nature of these collaborations in practice, if they occur at all. If dual enrollment is to continue as a feasible, practical option for students looking to gain succeed in college, then we must rethink the ways we approach these opportunities. Tackling college

credit onto traditional high school classes won't do. Treating high school adolescents like college adults won't do, either. The lines of distinction between high school and college are already blurred; educators must resist re-drawing those boundaries.

Practical Implications

The participants in this study received advanced credit for their freshman composition classes in several ways: Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and dual enrollment. Each of these pathways sets out to achieve different objectives and often attracts different kinds of students. No matter the path these students chose, all the participants in this study entered their advanced credit courses with the intention of continuing their education at a university. They all express the desire to “get ahead” in college through advanced credit and believed that the high school classes they took would help them in later years. This small group of participants represents a niche of high school students; their experiences are not typical, and I do not presume that their ambitions are shared by every high school student or college undergraduate. However, studying success stories such as these is valuable for writing instructors and policy makers. These participants' stories provide a valuable entry point into further research regarding the move between high school and college work and into the ways in which educators and policy makers can better serve students as they finish high school.

Some critics of advanced credit programs such as AP and IB argue that these platforms amount to a sophisticated form of tracking which privileges particular kinds of students and particular kinds of learning and assessments, namely those which lead to university admission. This description is not entirely wrong. Succeeding in challenging curricula such as AP and IB requires students to demonstrate not only good academic skills but also proficient study and time management skills as well. Moreover, the AP and IB assessments require fees that are not always

covered by public school districts. Even dual enrollment classes often require students to pay tuition to a college or university and to provide their own access to course materials. Of the advanced credit platforms I have described in this study, the IB Diploma Program is the most prescriptive, as it requires students to select courses in six specific subject areas, complete community service projects, and undertake independent research. None of these programs, AP, IB, or dual enrollment, is right for every student, and all of them are flawed in some way. Still, the findings of this study indicate that there are some essential characteristics of quality advanced college credit programs that are worth considering for students who may display other kinds of academic proficiency and who may have plans after high school that do not include university study.

Though each participant describes a unique path toward their current confidence as writers, one significant similarity is that all of them have formed a relationship with an instructor or writing mentor who took an interest in their writing and provided detailed, personal attention to their work. Taking the lessons from the strong relationships these students cite between themselves and their instructors could result in stronger writing in many academic subjects. Perhaps high school teachers could consider different ways to include writing in their assessments in other content areas, particularly science. Helping students to develop an academic voice and some ability to negotiate the tension among writing styles for various purposes may be helpful.

I am most intrigued by the finding that all the participants, no matter their major, are required to write on a regular basis. All of the participants have come to see themselves as successful writers and see writing as a valuable tool in their education and future professional fields. These students are able to switch their academic voices and lexicons to suit the purposes

for which they write. High school teachers can begin that kind of work by asking students to try out different purposes and audiences in different contexts for writing.

Looking at how students have experienced writing and themselves as writers between high school and college can inform pedagogical decisions at many levels—classroom teachers, policy makers, college instructors, etc. We all have to be aware of where our students come from, how to make meaningful educational opportunities and how to communicate with each other so that the college preparation that high school teachers do is relevant and helpful for students when they enter college.

Questions for My Teaching Practice

The findings and implications of this project provide some promising topics and questions for future research. In the future, I would like to look more closely at how race, gender, class, privilege affect students' experiences, especially since programs like IB and AP can be quite expensive. What can educators do to ensure more democratic access to advanced credit opportunities, and how can educators support students for success in these programs?

This study included students who entered universities with the intention of completing four-year degrees. Further studies could include a broader range of high school graduates. What can we learn by examining the writing lives of students who do not enter university study and/or do not take advantage of advanced credit opportunities? Is there really a difference in their experience and attitudes toward writing?

Further research encompassing a larger demographic may provide insight as to how race, class, and gender affect the ways that students experience advanced credit opportunities, becoming writers, and making a shift between high school work and what comes next for them. A more longitudinal look at a diverse group of participants could inform educators and policy

makers regarding bias in the ways students experience bias in advanced credit opportunities and writing instruction. How does the intersection of race, class, and gender affect the way students experience writing instruction in advanced credit classes? How do assumptions regarding race, class, and gender affect teaching and learning in advanced credit writing classes?

Finally, the six participants in this study represent success stories. Each took a different path toward college credit, and each has been successful. These participants describe themselves as confident, articulate writers. Their writing samples show sophisticated technique. Each of them recalls at least one instance of being proud to share a piece of writing. All the students in this study attribute at least some of their success to an instructor or writing mentor who was able to spend time and attention on them. That mentor was able to guide the student toward becoming the successful writers they are. Future research could examine teachers who are successful writing mentors and teachers who want to be successful writing mentors. What are the skills and behaviors that allow instructors to guide students to become confident, capable, enthusiastic academic writers? What does a good writing mentor do? Listening to the stories of students who have successfully experienced both advanced credit composition classes and undergraduate writing assessments is a valuable entryway to investigate further questions.

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APPENDIX A: INITIAL CONTACT LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

Date

Dear Student:

My name is Candence Robillard, and I am a doctoral candidate in the College of Education at Louisiana State University. The study I am conducting for my dissertation research examines the writing experiences of undergraduate college students who have received advanced credit for a freshman English composition class as high school students. Your participation in this study will provide valuable insight into the experiences of college student writers.

I would like to invite you to participate in this study. During the study, I will ask you to participate in a small group discussion about college writing, and I will ask you to participate in a one-on-one interview with me about your experience as a writer in college. In addition, I will ask you to collect samples of your writing, including rubrics or instructions given to you by your instructors. Small group discussions and individual interviews will be audio recorded. All information you provide to me will be kept anonymous. You will have a chance to read what I have written about you before I defend my dissertation.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. There is no known risk to participating in this study. You will not receive a grade for your participation, and you will not be penalized in any way if you choose not to participate. You are free to leave the study at any time with no penalty as well.

As a token of my appreciation of your time in sharing your experiences with me, you will receive a \$10 gift card upon completion of all components of the study.

If you consent to participate in this study, please sign the form attached to this letter. Thank you, and I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Candence Robillard, Ed. S.
Doctoral Candidate
Department of Education
Louisiana State University

Dr. Jacqueline Bach
Associate Dean
Department of Education
Louisiana State University

Consent Form for the Project:

Performance Site: Louisiana State University and Southeastern Louisiana University

Investigator: The following investigators are available for questions.

Candence Robillard
Doctoral Candidate
Education Specialist, Curriculum and Instruction
Louisiana State University
crobil1@lsu.edu

Dr. Jacqueline Bach
Associate Dean
Department of Education
Louisiana State University
jbach@lsu.edu

Purpose of the study: The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of undergraduate college student writers.

Inclusion Criteria:

- Receipt of advanced credit in one freshman-level English composition course
- Completion of at least three semesters of college course work on a college campus
- Current enrollment in a class that requires writing

Exclusion Criteria:

- Students who do not meet the above criteria
- Students who do not assent to further meetings, as indicated on the initial survey

Description of the Study:

Students will be asked to discuss, describe and reflect on their experiences as writers in college-level classes. As part of the data collection process, small group meetings and individual interviews will be audio recorded. Participants will be asked to collect artifacts related to their writing. All parts of the study will be collected during the Spring 2018 semester.

Benefits:

The results of this study will be shared with educators to help deepen knowledge of the experiences of college writers. This information could be used to consider ways to strengthen and improve advanced credit opportunities in composition classes.

Risks:

There are no known risks.

Right to Refuse:

Participation is voluntary, and a student will become part of the study only if written consent is given. At any time, the student may withdraw from the study without penalty.

Privacy:

All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law. To protect participants and maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms will be used in all written documents, and no identifying information will be published.

Financial Information:

There is no cost to participate in this study. Participants who complete all components of the study will receive a \$10 gift card.

Signatures: The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigator, Candence Robillard. If I have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, I can contact Dennis Landin, Ph.D., Chairman, Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692, irb@lsu.edu, www.lsu.edu/irb. I consent to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator's obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's Printed Name: _____

APPENDIX B: PRELIMINARY SURVEY QUESTIONS

Advanced College Credit Survey

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 How many semesters of college credit have you completed?

- ☐ 1 (1)
 - ☐ 2-3 (2)
 - ☐ 4 or more (3)
-

Q4 What year do you plan to graduate with your undergraduate degree?

- ☐ 2018 (1)
 - ☐ 2019 (2)
 - ☐ 2020 (3)
 - ☐ 2021 (4)
-

Q3 What are your plans after college graduation?

- ☐ Begin work in my field of study (1)
 - ☐ Attend graduate school (2)
 - ☐ Other (3)
-



Q5 Did you take and/or receive advanced college credit for an English composition class as a high school student?

☐ yes (1)

☐ no (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Did you take and/or receive advanced college credit for an English composition class as a high school student = no

Q6 Describe the composition class you took or the way you received credit for English composition as a high school student.

☐ Advanced Placement (1)

☐ Dual Enrollment (2)

☐ International Baccalaureate (3)

☐ Received credit for ACT/SAT score (4)

☐ Other (5)

Q7 What grade did you earn in the advanced college credit course you took as a high school student?

☐ A (1)

☐ B (2)

☐ C (3)

☐ D (4)

☐ F (5)

☐ P (6)

Q8 Which of the following best describes the advanced credit composition course you took?

- ☐ I took the class at my high school, and my high school teacher taught the material. (1)
- ☐ I took the class at my high school, and a college instructor taught the material. (2)
- ☐ I took the class online. (3)
- ☐ I took the class on a college campus, and a college instructor taught the material. (4)
- ☐ I took the class on either a high school or college campus, and there was an online component to the course. (5)
- ☐ My experience was different from these. (6)
-

Q9 In your advanced college composition class, did you provide feedback to your peers' writing?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
-

Q10 In your advanced college composition class, did you receive feedback on your writing from your peers?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
-

Q11 How helpful was the feedback received on your writing in your college composition class?

	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Somewhat agree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat disagree (5)	Disagree (6)	Strongly disagree (7)
I received helpful feedback from my peers. (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I received helpful feedback from my teacher. (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I knew how to improve my own writing based on instruction in the class. (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q12 What kinds of writing assignments were you asked to complete in your advanced credit composition course?

Q13 Since you have enrolled in college, have you been required to complete writing assignments in your college classes?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Since you have enrolled in college, have you been required to complete writing assignments in you... = No

Q14 In what classes have you been asked to complete writing assignments for a grade?

Q15 What kinds of writing assignments have you been asked to complete in your college classes?

Q16 How long were the finished writing assignments you have been asked to complete in your college classes?

- ☐ 1-3 pages (1)
 - ☐ 4-10 pages (2)
 - ☐ longer than 10 pages (3)
-

Q17 In a typical college class, how much time are you given to complete writing assignments?

- ☐ one week or less (1)
 - ☐ 2-4 weeks (2)
 - ☐ more than 4 weeks (3)
-

Q18 What kinds of guidance have you received on your writing in college? Please select all that apply.

☐ from your instructors (1)

☐ from a peer (2)

☐ from a writing center (3)

☐ from an online source (4)

☐ other (5)

Q19 How was writing guidance made available to you? Please select all that apply.

☐ My instructor required conferences with him or her. (1)

☐ My instructor offered writing help, but did not require it. (2)

☐ My instructor required peer review (3)

☐ My instructor offered peer review opportunities, but did not require them. (4)

☐ I was required to use a writing center. (5)

☐ A writing center was available, but not required. (6)

☐ I had to seek help on my own. (7)

Q20 How effective was the writing guidance you received in your college classes in terms of improving your writing?

- ☐ Extremely effective (1)
 - ☐ Very effective (2)
 - ☐ Moderately effective (3)
 - ☐ Slightly effective (4)
 - ☐ Not effective at all (5)
-

Q21 How well did your advanced college credit composition class prepare you for college writing?

- ☐ Extremely well (1)
 - ☐ Very well (2)
 - ☐ Moderately well (3)
 - ☐ Slightly well (4)
 - ☐ Not well at all (5)
-

Q22 What advice would you give to someone who is considering the advanced credit path you took?

Q23 Would you be willing to participate in a semester-long research study that asks you to share and discuss your experiences as a writer?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Would you be willing to participate in a semester-long research study that asks you to share and... = No

Q24 Please provide an email address so that I can contact you for participation in the study.

End of Block: Default Question Block

APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Initial Survey Questions

Advanced College Credit Writing Experiences

Adapted from Tinberg and Nadeau (2013)

Background Information

How many semesters of college credit have you completed?

What is your current major? What are your plans after college?

Advanced College Credit Information

Describe the composition class you took for advanced college credit? (IB, AP, DE)

What grade did you earn in this course?

What was the class like? Did you take the class on the high school or college campus? Was there an online component to the course?

In your advanced college credit class, did you participate in peer writing groups? Were you asked to share your writing with classmates? Were you asked to provide feedback to your classmates' writing?

Describe the kinds of writing you were asked to do in that class. Were you asked to write pieces other than essays? (movie reviews, letters, . . .)

College Writing

What kinds of writing assignments have you been asked to write in college?

How long were the finished pieces? How much time were you given to complete them?

What kind of guidance have you received on your writing in college? From your instructors? From a tutor or writing center?

How was guidance on your writing made available to you? Was it part of your class requirements? Did you seek out guidance on your own?

Were you ever expected to participate in peer review for writing assignments in college? What were those experiences like?

Reflection Questions

What advice would you give to someone who is considering the advanced credit path you took?

How did your advanced college credit class prepare you for college writing?

Would you be willing to participate in a semester-long research study that asks you to share and discuss your experiences as a writer?

APPENDIX D: LIZ'S WRITING ARTIFACTS

Resistance- HDR

Hey y'all.

We've finally made it!

What a journey with so many memories it has been.

My first memories stretch all the way back to kindergarten when K and I managed to get kicked off of the carpet during reading time nearly everyday.

I remember Mrs. C's talent shows every Friday, and how much I looked forward to hearing C's dazzling song selection for that week.

My memories stretch into middle school, but, really, who wants to revisit those days?

Finally, my high school days have provided an abundance of priceless memories that I know I'll hold onto forever.

For some of us the [high school] trek started somewhere in middle school (sorry), for others, time at [this school] has only consisted of high school, some of us here have left and come back, and some of us have called [this school] home since kindergarten.

Whatever the situation, I'm confident that we all have our fair share of memories here. I know I do.

And truly, nothing makes me happier than to tell you that Henry is the primary source of ridiculousness and fits of laughter, the sort where you experience that flash of panic that you may never breathe properly again, in many of those memories.

So, I know that not everyone had the opportunity to get to know Henry as well as some of us, so if you don't mind, I'll just share some short "Henry Stories" that, I think, about say it all.

So, first of all, Henry may have been the quirkiest person I have ever met. Take his wardrobe for example. Rain or shine, 95 degrees or polar vortex, he was wearing a white polo, and one of his three favorite pairs of shorts. K likes to remind me that rather than getting a new pair of shorts to replace damaged ones that he must have worn for years, he remarked to her that he'd just "have to find a sewing kit and fix them immediately."

You may know that Henry took art classes, but what you might not know is that he loved it and that he was really really good. This past year Henry sat next to me in art and every once in a while I'd glance over to see what he was up to. I promise you that 90% of the time he was sitting in front of his computer waiting for The Sims to load. For whatever reason, his Sims game took 45 minutes to open, but, he just sat there patiently waiting to do what he loved more than anything else in the world- to build. And build he did. Rather

than creating characters on The Sims, like everyone else in the world, Henry spent hours designing beautiful buildings and interior rooms. Sometimes he made spaces with certain people in mind and sometimes he built just to build. When he showed me some of his work I suddenly understood why he never had time for homework.

A final Henry memory I'll share for now is from U-high's trip to the superdome. Henry, E, S and I all rode to New Orleans together, during which Henry ate all of the brownies E's mom had baked us. Once in New Orleans, we spent the day there. We walked around town, visited the Roosevelt Hotel, went to the game and enjoyed a great dinner.

My favorite memory from that day was actually not in New Orleans but when we returned to the school parking lot to pick up our cars. As you might recall, Henry drove an old-school bronco and earlier that day someone had painted his car with car paint. He insisted that his car was so old the paint would never come off if he didn't take it off soon. So we all agreed to help. We played Amy Winehouse and Duffy from E's car and scrubbed down Henry's car at midnight in the U-high parking lot. Have you ever had an experience where in the midst of something you just know that what you're doing is so special and you'll hold onto the memory of it forever? This was one of those moments. School seemed millions of miles away and I started to believe that maybe adults were right when they say that our teenage years are the best years of our lives.

About five months ago, my Henry memories took a turn I never thought they would. Sitting in the hospital with my crying friends didn't feel real, going to prayer services for him and his family didn't feel real, having an empty spot in my classes didn't feel real, and in many ways it still doesn't feel real. I was, and sometimes find that I still am, consumed by anger and sadness and just this overwhelming feeling of grief that consumes me from the inside. I still constantly feel like I've somehow left a huge part of me at home. Not a day has gone by where I haven't thought about Henry, laughed at something he would have found funny, listened to a song that reminded me of him, or just missed having him around.

At one point in Cormac McCarthy's post-apocalyptic book, The Road, one character, a little boy, turns to his father and asks, "What's the bravest thing you've ever done?" to which the father replies, "I got up this morning."

By those standards, we've all done the bravest thing we can ever do, we've shown up. Whether it's sadness after Henry's death, dealing with your parent's divorce, the loss of another friend or loved one, difficulty accepting yourself or the way you look, struggling with addiction or depression, no matter how much you didn't want to, you've kept going. You got up for school the next day and pulled on something that would pass for a uniform, understanding that for you, for us, the *only* way out is **through**.

There's no explaining or justifying what Henry did. I still don't understand how this could have happened to a boy who had so much to love, who sought to repair, to build, to share, to laugh and to make others laugh.

What I do know is that for a second, just one second, Henry completely lost sight of what may very well be the most powerful thing we're granted as human beings, the impermanence of today and the sliver of hope that lives in tomorrow. Henry forgot what we've all managed to remember: that tomorrow doesn't promise to be any better than today, but it might be, and that the only way to find out is to get there. As long as we're alive, we've got tomorrow ahead of us. As long as we've got tomorrow, we have hope, and with that, we have reason to keep being brave.

And really, it makes sense that I feel like I'm missing a piece of myself, because, tangibly, I am. Maybe you've experienced this with the loss of a family member, a friend, or through the loss of Henry. When you care deeply for someone, that person occupies space within you. In essence, I think we're all the summation of bits and pieces of those people we surround ourselves with. If this is true, Henry is very much alive. *Anyone* you've lost is very much alive within you. With that being said, the responsibility falls to us. We've got to keep going. We've always got to keep going. We have to be kind to ourselves and keep Henry alive and well within us, we've got to love the idea of tomorrow for him. Alright?

I'll close with something I think would make Henry very happy.

One of Henry's favorite architects, Lebbeus Woods, wrote a blog post entitled "Architecture and Resistance." Henry came to call this post the guiding text of his vision as an architect.

Within the post, Woods discusses what it means to “resist” and follows those ideas with a “resistance checklist” or a series of ideas and things that one should seek to resist.

Interestingly, Woods doesn’t believe that resistance is synonymous with negation or rejection. Instead, Woods believes that resistance should be a measured struggle against those things and principles that can consume us and cause us to lose sight of tomorrow if not otherwise controlled.

Woods checklist includes things like:

- Resist what seems inevitable
- Resist any idea that contains the word algorithm
- Resist the nagging feeling that they will win
- Resist any idea that contains the word “interface”
- Resist the idea that life is simple, afterall

My days [in high school], senior year especially, have taught me everything I know, some of it I’m convinced I’ll never use, but some of it, like learning those things that I must resist, I’ll call upon everyday. Together a few of the IB kids shared with me what they know must be resisted, and I’ll leave you with these words:

-Resist the idea that you can get through life on your own

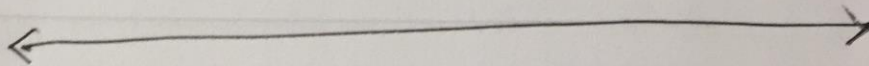
-Resist the idea that there's only one way out

-Resist the feeling that you aren't good enough

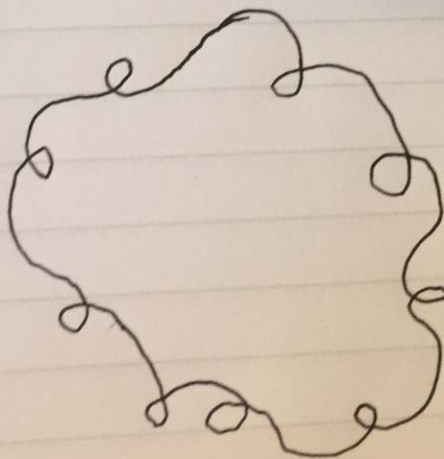
-Resist that idea that you don't need help

-And resist the idea that tomorrow won't be any better than today.

Good, well told
Stories are not:



Well told stories / narratives
somehow look more like:



APPENDIX E: LONDON'S WRITING ARTIFACTS

wonder vs. madness - she's a witchless, but why does she like me?

CJ: Twelfth Night, Sebastian, IV. iii

This is the air; that is the glorious sun; this is the air, that's the glorious sun.
 This pearl she gave me, I do feel't and see't. I can feel and see this pearl she gave me.
 And though 'tis wonder that enwraps me thus, I may be dazed and confused,
 * Yet 'tis not madness. Where's Antonio then? but I'm not insane. Where's Antonio, then?
 I could not find him at the Elephant. I didn't find him at the Elephant.
 * Yet there he was; and there I found this credit. But he'd been there before me,
 That he did range the town to seek me out. and they told me he'd gone out looking for me.
 * His counsel now might do me golden service; I could really use his advice right now.
 For though my soul disputes well with my sense, I'm sure this situation is due to some mistake.
 * That this may be some error, but not madness, and I don't think I'm crazy.
 * Yet doth this accident and flood of fortune But this sudden flood of good luck
 * So far exceed all instance, all discourse, is so unbelievable
 * That I am ready to distrust mine eyes that I'm ready to distrust my own eyes
 * And wrangle with my reason that persuades me and my own rational mind
 * To any other trust but that I am mad when they tell me I'm not insane -
 Or else the lady's mad; yet, if 'twere so, maybe the lady's insane. But if that were the
 She could not sway [her house] command her followers, she wouldn't be able to run her house, command her servants.
 * Take and give back affairs and their dispatch listen to reports, make decisions.
 * With such a smooth, discreet and stable bearing and take care of business as smoothly
 * As I perceive she does: there's something in't as she does. There's something going on
 * That is deceivable. But here [the lady] comes. That's not what it seems. But here she

Antonio: best friend, has been arrested
 Elephant: the pub
 the lady: Olivia the witchless

Category	Earning 0 points	Earning 2 point	Earning 4 points	Notes
Score: Scansion	Not completed	Irregular lines are starred, some foot-by-foot scansion completed, or more than 3 errors in notation of stress.	All lines are clearly scanned with correct markings for unstressed and stressed syllables x / or ~ /, irregular lines starred	
Score: Operative Words and Sounding	Not completed	Some words are notated (marker or highlighter), some alliteration/assonance	The operative word(s), alliteration/assonance in very line are clearly notated (marker or highlighter)	
Score: Meaning	Not completed	Definitions and/or pronunciations for any difficult, obscure references are clearly notated in margins	--	
Category	Earning 1 point	Earning 2 points	Earning 3 points	Notes
Performance: Body and presence	Consistently out of alignment, recurring tension, 1+ or 3+ circle	Occasionally out of alignment, recurring tension, 1+ or 3+ circle	Almost, if not always, centered, at ease, in 2+ circle with imaginary scene partner.	
Performance: Breath and support	Consistent demonstration of lack of support habit(s)	Occasional demonstration lack of support habit(s).	The majority of the time, speaking on support.	
Performance: Free, placed voice	Consistent demonstration of unfree voice habit(s).	Occasional demonstration of unfree voice habit(s).	Free, placed voice, with easy access to full range and resonant possibilities.	
Performance: Clear speech	Inaudible or unclear text.	5+ words which are unclear, inaudible, not observing meter.	All words are fully, muscularly sounded in meter.	
Performance: Command of text	Meaning is general; text unmemorized; language is deenergized/casual.	Meaning is sometimes specific; text is nearly fully memorized; language is mostly used to affect.	Meaning is specific in each line; text is fully memorized; language is used to affect.	

TOTAL

/25 points

TOTAL :

/15

APPENDIX F: MOLLY'S WRITING ARTIFACTS

[University Logo]

Course: [Title]

Professor: [Name]

Project Part 1

Monday, February 26, 2018

Connect 4 Team Members:

[Names]

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P1A: Project Proposal

[P1A PowerPoint Presentation](#)

P1A Feedback

We benefited from the P1A exercise with receiving feedback from our classmates. In summary, they wondered how we can convince alumni to participate in our platform since they are already very busy. We realized that we need to be very clear with our goals and intentions to convince people to use and participate in our product. This is something that we will have to further investigate. Also, we had to ensure that we weren't already providing a solution by deciding on making a mobile application with certain features, but that we had to take a step back and follow structured research to then ideate and develop a solution based on the user rather than preconceived problems.

Here are photos of two questions:



Data you will need to collect to learn more about your users and the problem space

You should walk away from your interaction with the team with an understanding of **what** specific types of data they plan collect and **why**?

Write at least one question for the team to **inquire about the specific types of data they plan to collect**

How would you identify what people are looking for?

What **suggestions** do you have for the team for important data that they should consider collecting to understand their users?

Think about some of the feasibility barriers to asking professional questions.
Communicate these suggestions to the team!



Important characteristics of the user group

You should walk away from this interaction with the team with an understanding of some important characteristics of the target user group.

Write at least one question for the team to **inquire about the user group they are studying**.

What would be beneficial for these usergroup if they volunteer and use their time to help others?

What **suggestions** do you have for the team to help them better understand characteristics of the target user group?

~~other~~
Communicate these suggestions to the team!

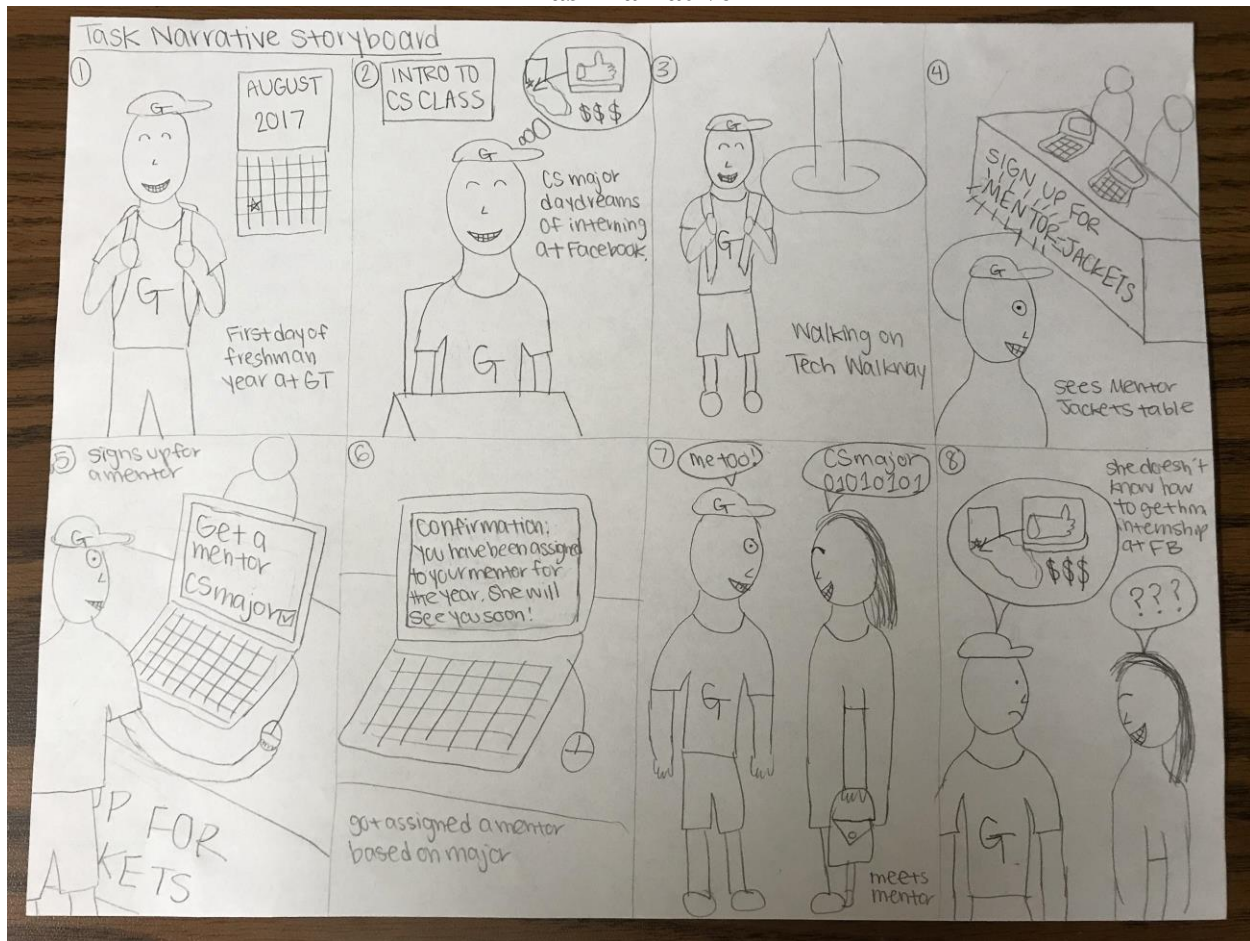
Is Resume a enough data to know who they are.

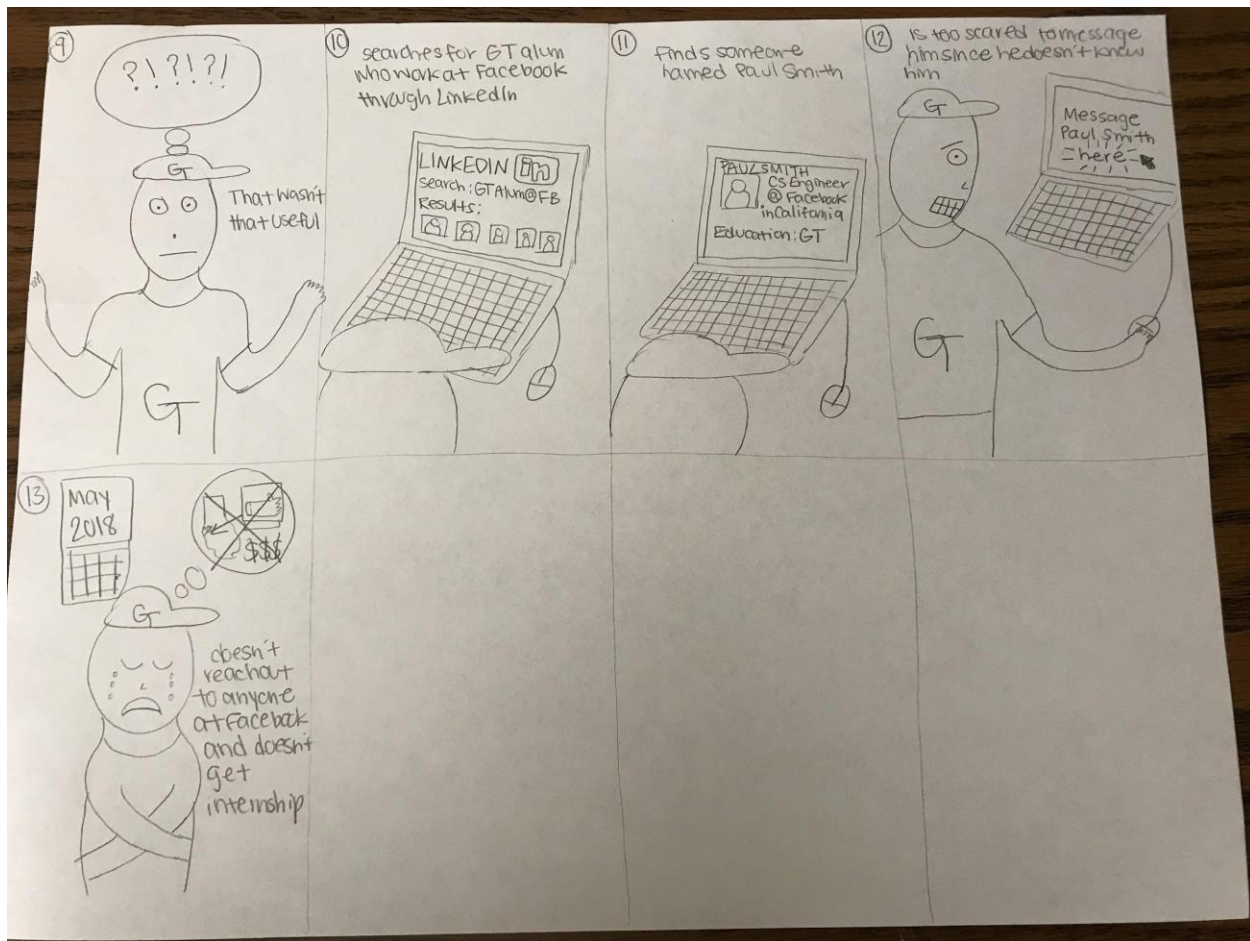
Here are other questions:

- Will you be conducting surveys or leading focus groups?
- How are you going to use your interviews to design your product? It sounds like you're just going to ask if they'll use it.
- What will motivate the professionals to participate in this platform?

- Is there an incentive for the people the GT students are networking with? Most alumni/working professionals are very busy, so why would they want to join this?
- Think about some of the feasibility barriers to assign professionals questions.
- How would you identify what people are looking for?
- What do users actually want? Why can't they get the needed resources?
- What would be beneficial for these user group if they volunteer and use their time to help others?
- Is a resume enough data to know who the person is?
- Does the user group include all skilled workers? How do you verify that?
- Are the targeted user groups having a big enough trouble finding information?
- Have you thought about the alumni user's and their ability and interest in using the platform?
- How will you determine if someone's an "expert"?
- Is this intended for internships or more research or just network with alumni?

Task narrative





The task narrative describes what currently happens when a student wants to find a mentor.

Task Environment

(a) Describe the task environment

The issue with finding the right kind of guidance from experts deals with personal quandaries, which prevents students from making fully informed decisions. Currently, users perform the task of obtaining mentors through college affiliated organizations including SAA, Mentor Jackets, etc. or through online websites like LinkedIn that are geared towards professional purposes. Another source of mentorship includes networking with guidance counsellors and friends/acquaintances who have the same interest.

When it comes to the larger third party organizations like SAA and Mentor Jackets, users sign up (either online or at an event) and pay an initial annual fee to join the association. The third party organizations then contact the student user by email asking about general information regarding their major, and pair them up with a single person from the industry who the student emails to reach out to personally. From then on, it is the student's responsibility to contact the

mentor and stay in touch. In addition to that, these organizations host events, inviting alumni and students, in order to get students to meet with graduated students in the workforce.

The task environment of LinkedIn is a social networking community designed for businesses and professional purposes. It involves signing up and posting professional skills and employment history, allowing registered members to establish and document networks of people they know and trust professionally. It allows for posting and online messaging revolving around professional content. It is a public platform open to anyone, and privacy settings can be enabled based on preference.

(b) Strengths and deficiencies of current approach

Organizations affiliated with schools and universities have the advantage that their organization is deeply rooted in the college, creating a sense of credibility and pervasiveness throughout the campus. Another strength is that the organization has a large database of alumni and professionals from the industry that it has built up over years, and hosts events inviting them to it. This encourages not only an online interaction, but a physical one as well, enabling students to verbally interact with potential mentors.

However, the system has several deficiencies. The process of assigning a mentor requires a third party organization to facilitate the match, when this could be done using an app. The fact that an arbitrary individual working in the organization picks out a mentor, creates a constraint as the student has no choice in accepting or rejecting this mentor. This random selection of a mentor could potentially be an inappropriate match as the selection process is void of any additional layer of screening to find more specific overlapping fields of interest. For example, if a CS student focusing on databases is paired with a CS Alumni whose concentration was Artificial Intelligence, then the student wouldn't be able to obtain knowledge in his/her specific field of interest. Another constraint is that the user is limited to a single mentor for the entire year, preventing students from having exposure to guidance from other people in the industry. If the student doesn't know what kinds of questions to ask the mentor or how to proceed with conversation, students are often stuck and might not know how to further elicit information that might be of importance to them. Finally, since mentors and mentees are allowed to respond at their own time, there can be sense of time lag in between interactions.

When it comes to online platforms, the task environment of using LinkedIn is more revolved around presenting oneself professionally rather than finding assistance or advice from other professionals in the industry. Since the website is open to absolutely everyone, and displays only professional qualifications, the platform lacks a sense of personal touch that drives people to seek help or communicate with someone about career doubts they might have. Instead, the site is built upon expanding your network of professional connections and displaying professional

accomplishments to impress potential employers. This disincentives people from reaching out to complete strangers for help as it might seem intrusive and isn't the overall intent of this platform.

(c) Existing systems and related literature available

<https://www.inc.com/john-boitnott/9-top-platforms-for-finding-a-mentor-in-2016.html>

P1.2.c

Describe the general space you plan to study (2-3 sentences)

We want to explore how might we bridge the knowledge gap between [University] students and alumni and faculty. In this way, students can immediately contact someone who they can ask the right questions to.

What is the specific problem that you are trying to solve or need that you are trying to address (without mentioning solutions)? (up to 2 sentences) We will refer to this as the The Problem.

The Problem→ Most [University] students have the skills and passion to succeed, but many of us lack having the right people who can guide us to discover our full potential. The best way to obtain information is to talk to experts in the field such as alumni, faculty or professionals with years of experience.

Is technology really a necessary solution to The Problem? Why? (1 paragraph)

Technology is necessary because students need a way to easily access all the mentors and their information. There are no existing technologies targeted directly towards the [University] community that help students seek advice or mentorship. Technology will allow users to see the up-to-date version at anytime.

Describe an approach to addressing The Problem that does not rely on technology. (1 paragraph)

If we did not use technology, we could hold an event where all the mentors and mentees could meet each other. However, it would be harder to know which person to start talking to since you would know have any background information about them.

What might you lose if you were to introduce poorly-designed technology to solve The Problem? (2-3 sentences)

If the technology had poorly-designed interface, it would create barriers for users. They would feel confused and frustrated on how to accomplish their task even to the point where they would stop using the product.

Search. What sites (e.g., reddit, quora, Nextdoor, [University] website, Facebook groups, news articles, product pages, etc.) have you visited to investigate The Problem? Any physical locations or non-Internet-based resources can be included here too, but you will need to spend more time describing it.

Must have >5 resources. Cite all sources by proving their titles, their URL, dates accessed, whether or not you found something informative, and if you did, what was it.

Source title	Source URL	Dates of access (list all)	Informative ?	If informative, why?
Top 9 Apps for Mentoring	https://www.inc.com/john-boitnott/9-top-platforms-for-finding-a-mentor-in-2016.html	2/12/18	Yes	Gave us 9 examples of mentoring apps
iCouldBe	http://www.icouldbe.org/standard/public/mb_index.asp	2/12/18	Yes	Mentoring app for underprivileged high school students. Connect them to mentor to encourage them to stay in school
MentorCity	https://www.mentorcitey.com/	2/12/18	Yes/No (read explanation)	It is clear on what it intends to do, but not exactly on what are the use cases.
SCORE	https://www.score.org/content/search-mentor	2/12/18	Yes	specializes in helping small businesses, providing a variety of tools that include workshops and document templates
Mogul	https://onmogul.com/mogul_at_work	2/12/18	Yes	Helps people build their professional and personal skills. Mogul is like having

				your own personal career coach in your back pocket.
--	--	--	--	---

Compare.

1.
 - a. Name: SAA Minute Mentoring
 - b. Found at: [University] Mentor Jackets - SAA
 - c. What it provides: help for current [University] Students in connecting with [University] alumni for personal and professional development. It is backed through a website that allows to input filters on what does the mentee want in a mentor, and provides the former with potential mentors and their contact..
 - d. Target “customers” or “users”: [University] students seeking advice related to exploring majors, informational interviews, resume reviews, mock interviews, etc. These students want help outside of year-long formal mentoring relationship.
2.
 - a. Name: College of Computing Advising
 - b. Found at: College of Computing
 - c. What it provides: every CoC student is matched with an advisor by both degree program and last name. Advisors can assist students in achieving their academic, career, and personal goals. They provide help to students on navigating the registration process, planning out their educational path, and recommendations about available resources to ensure student success.
 - d. Target “customers” or “users”: all CoC students
3.
 - a. Name: Knit Mentorship Program
 - b. Found at: [University] Division of Student Life
 - c. What it provides: academic support, advice, and direction from experienced students to students navigating their first semester of classes at [University]. The mentors aim to nurture personal growth with each of their mentees based on their personal goals for their first year and entire college career at [University] and to share [University] traditions with the newest Yellow Jackets.
 - d. Target “customers” or “users”: first year students looking for guidance from an upperclassmen mentor to navigate their first semester at [University].
4.
 - a. Name: College of Computing Mentoring Program

- b. Found at: [University] College of Computing
 - c. What it provides: a yearlong development program that provides freshmen with professional and leadership skills, and prospective CoC students with insight on what it is like to be a Computer Science major in [University]. The mentors are current [University] students that want to use their own experience to enhance the experience of their peers.
 - d. Target “customers” or “users”: CoC freshmen and prospective students.
- 5.
- a. Name: OrgSync
 - b. Found at: [University] Student Engagement
 - c. What it provides: an online community for campus that helps departments, programs, and all member-based organizations across campus streamline processes and drive engagement. Relating this to *The Problem*, OrgSync allows students to browse through all the campus organizations, read through their basic information and find their main contacts.
 - d. Target “customers” or “users”: relating to *The Problem*, students seeking information about potential clubs to join.

Synthesize.

Strengths of Existing Products

Several existing products provide Freshman a glimpse into the Computer Science program specifically, which is helpful to those deciding about the major and its threads, these programs are geared towards a specific type of students, which is helpful because students don't receive non-relevant information.

Products also do a good job of connecting older, experienced students with younger students, with most of the products being geared towards Freshmen.

Mentor jackets does a lot with career development through mock interviews, professional connections, and resume look overs.

Gaps in Existing Products

Currently there are a lot of different services, but they are each targeted towards a specific type of student with different needs. This means that students have to spend lots of time looking for a program for their need specifically rather than one all encompassing program that will fulfill their desires.

Also most products provide long-term mentorship rather than a short meeting. They seem like a huge commitment, so that if you sign up for the program you have to stick with it for a while. This doesn't serve people who just need a quick meeting for a problem they are having.

Focus/Don't Focus Areas

Long term mentorship seems to be a heavily covered area among existing products, so we should avoid creating a technology that enables students to find long term mentors.

Mentor jackets has a great site in that it allows students to filter by what they want in a mentor. We should focus on that, but perhaps expand it to subjects students are interested in or skills they want to learn more about.

Currently many programs connect students to alumni/older students so we should also aim to connect students to faculty since that need isn't being served.

Any refinements to your project description.

Make sure to focus on why alumni would like to mentor student and give their time and efforts back to the school?

Context

Our design will operate in the context of a [University] community that is eager to seek and provide academic and professional guidance. We are aware that our alma mater is a stellar academic niche that breeds no less than the best professionals, but this only happens when the right people fall in the right place. We want to streamline this process through a simple yet effective design that gets the growth-seeking people in touch with the appropriate human resources.

Most of our users, meaning faculty and students, are gathered in the [University], so the eventual prototype should be fully working in all of them. These include not only the [City] campus, but also those in [other places]. The prototype should also work in any place interested alumni may now live in, as alumni are also considered within our human resources. Therefore, we should aim to make the prototype accessible from anywhere in the world and our functionality should take into account the fact that our users have different time zones and daily routines.

A prototype with scope of our context would need to rely on various technologies. Since we still need to draw data from our tentative users, but there are some specific tech areas that could be eventually be proved useful. To match mentor to mentee, we would need an Artificial Intelligence algorithm. To make sure the information is properly stored and gets to the right

people, we need a robust Internet of Things backing technology: we could use a database of our own, or cloud-based storage. Also, as we want to guarantee only [University] community people have access to the system, we'd require a cybersecurity wall. When we put together all these ideas, we envision an eventual system that supports collaboration from both a help website and on-site help from IT experts that are acknowledged with the system.

User Research Report

For this study, we employed ethnographic interviews in order to gain a perspective on relations between humans and the artifacts and solutions they design and use (Blomberg, Burrell). We also used surveys to collect attitudes and perceptions towards the current form of mentorship in the context of college and to understand, at mass, people's motivation and satisfaction with seeking and maintaining a mentor. We didn't utilize standard research methods typically used with market research groups (e.g. focus groups, telephone interviews) because we wanted to gain a more actionable understanding of users' daily habits (in the form of ethnographic interviews) that more accurately inform the design of viable solutions. Surveys usually have a great disparity between what people say they do and what they actually do so we used interviews to complement this data. The questions were structured in an open ended fashion in order to understand everything the user had to say with no constraints.

We attended the SAA event and interviewed the students and professionals who were there because according to the principles of ethnography we gathered information in the settings in which the activities of interest normally occur. Since this event was populated by individuals looking to sign up for a mentor, we believed that such an environment would enhance the users' ability to fully articulate what they do and how they do it with the access to the social and material aspects of their environments (Blomberg and Burrell). The descriptiveness of the user interviews was crucial in understanding events and activities as they occurred in people's lives, without evaluating the efficacy of people's everyday practices. Additionally, we found that this method helped us gain an insider's view of a situation as it allowed us to see the world from the perspective of the people and describe behavior in terms relevant and meaningful to the study of participants (Blomberg, Burrell).

One issue with solely conducting interviews with people that were at the SAA event is that we conducted convenience sampling and didn't maintain the component of "holisticness". We didn't consider the larger context of the school campus as we focused only on individuals who valued mentorship. Hence, to incorporate this element into our studies, we interviewed students who weren't affiliated with the organization and additionally conducted surveys that questioned a random sample of university students (posted on the university's facebook group). While this method wasn't preferable to ethnographic interviews, we found that the mass data

(not as reliable) could be valuable to support future decisions or implementations in the creation process.

How those methods were carried out

Target User Group	Number Observed	Number Interviewed	Other (specify)
Students who weren't involved in SAA who had startups	4	2	Several students have startups
Alumni or professionals in the industry	1	1	We interviewed the VP of the [University] Alumni Association
International students	1	1	This international student is from Malaysia.
Students who were heavily involved with SAA Leadership team	1	1	This student was very knowledgeable about all the mentoring organizations on campus.
Graduate students	1	1	The graduate student utilized graduate students' mentoring resources

Instruments used in research

Method (e.g. interview, observation, contextual inquiry, survey)	Data review and analysis approach	Rationale for approach
<p>Ethnographic Interview: Interviews with seven members of the target user group of students</p> <p>Interviews with the other target user group of professionals in the industry</p>	<p>Interview responses were segmented by speaker turn</p> <p>As a team we reviewed all the data collected that was transcribed from recordings of the interview, and used these to create individual affinity notes, each representing a single idea or a response to a question</p> <p>In a bottom up fashion, we</p>	<p>The affinity diagrams allowed us to more easily see general trends in activities and attitudes across the people we interviewed</p>

	constructed an affinity diagram as a group with the affinity notes (See Appendix[specify]). This process resulted in 12 blue groups- each of which represents an attitude or experience with mentorship or technology. The pink notes are a more general summary of how users go about with each of the activities.	
<p>A short survey with open and closed-format questions to identify student status and ask about:</p> <p>Closed-format questions about-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender, age, school year, clubs - Rating importance and usefulness of mentors <p>Open format questions captured free-response data about-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentorship status and how they were obtained - Attitudes about mentorship 	<p>Data from closed-format questions about gender, age, and student status were treated as nominal data</p> <p>Data about attitudes were treated as interval(numeric values on a scale from 1-5).</p> <p>Descriptive statistics (about mentorship expectations and past habits) were used to analyze data</p> <p>Open format questions containing free-response data was used in creating affinity diagram</p>	<p>Some of the nominal responses were designed to have some overlap and others were mutually exclusive. The closed format questions helped us identify basic details about students to distinguish different user personas and provide demographic information</p> <p>The responses with quantitative data were important in understanding what percentage of students voluntarily use and value mentors.</p> <p>This helps us understand how to develop the app in the future- whether it should be designed for students who opt for mentorship services of the themselves rather than through forced means</p>

Analysis of User Research Data

Data analysis activities performed

Data Analysis Approach	Analysis Process	Rationale behind use
Affinity Diagram	1. Jotted down the	Affinity diagrams allow us to

	<p>insights drawn from the interviews in yellow post-it notes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Placed each post-it with others that shared a common theme. 3. As groups started to emerge, we put a title to the categories, which helped us place and remaining post-its and classify outliers. 4. We broke down the four categories we created into more specific subcategories. 	<p>see how insights gathered from different interviews are connected. We can be more aware of what people liked and disliked about their mentorship experiences. That brings out issues where there's room from improvement, and therefore create a standard approach to the problem that caters to all needs of the user spectrum.</p>
Analysis of survey data	<p>Went through the summary of the Google Form, and noted down insights and detected patterns in the data. Understood the different types of users and the different mentorship experiences from the varied demographics of campus.</p>	<p>After gathering data from a survey, it is necessary to analyze in in order to draw insights from it and understand the user needs.</p>

Findings from Analysis of User Research Data

The greater insights from the affinity diagram were that people enjoy being and give importance to having good mentors. The interviewees want someone that help them navigate Georgia Tech in different ambits: professional, academic, spiritual and social. Some find mentors especially useful in the beginning of a new chapter, like starting college or beginning to seek jobs, as mentors can help with goal-setting. Interviewees wish their mentors were understanding and helpful - “relatable”, “social”, “honest”, “compassionate” and “rational” are some words they used to describe an ideal mentor. From the survey data, we understood mentees need a proactive, professional and easy-going person from whom they can get advice, growth and adjustment to the real world. One survey answer that stood out was: “a good listener that makes valid points”, so we should aim to have mentors that instruct through data and solid knowledge based on experience. As one of our users was a mentor, we learned that mentors usually like mentoring too, as they become more empathetic and learn from their mentees.

We learned that people find mentorship in three different ways: under someone else's advice, own initiative, under or just finding it naturally. Regarding the first way, realized having someone that tells you how, when and where to find the right mentorship is key, so that a person can move to seeking mentorship on their own, which gears us to the second point. From the affinity diagram, we realized that SAA has a great mentorship matching system, as members described it as easy and effective. Adding this to the survey data, we realized most people know there are resources, but are not aware of all the options, thus missing out on some programs that might be a better fit for their goals. People also turn to academic channels to find mentors in that ambit. Once people are in their "element", it is easier for them to be surrounded by people that can naturally become mentors, so, if we taught upperclassmen to seek and capitalize those relationships, they could learn to find a mentor in someone that they did not expect to.

Regarding frequency and type of interactions, mentor-mentee pairs find whatever format works better for them, but mentees generally wish there was more face-to-face interaction. Ideally, we would find what works best for each specific type of mentorship and have it as a suggestion. Finally, we asked people about their search for information. Since there's a group of people that prefer to ask Google rather than a real person, we would assume that technology is a great pathway to get connected, but our mentor interviewee said that he is reluctant to learn new technology, especially if LinkedIn already exists as a social network to find like-minded people in the professional ambit. Therefore, for our solution to cater to all user needs and we need to be more understanding of all of user spectrum.

User Personas [All Fictional]

Len "People-Connector" Contardo

Xtensio



"Every great achiever is inspired by a great mentor."

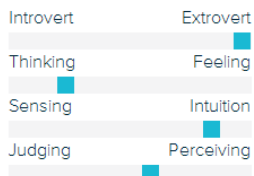
Age: 49

Work: VP of Georgia Tech Alumni Association

Family: Married with kids

Location: Johns Creek, GA

Personality



Leader Networker Volunteer

Recruiter Mentor Manager

About Len

Lead of team of seven professionals to provide programs and services to over 140,000 Georgia Tech alumni and friends worldwide. Develop innovative ways to leverage technology and attract the next generation of volunteer leaders at Tech.

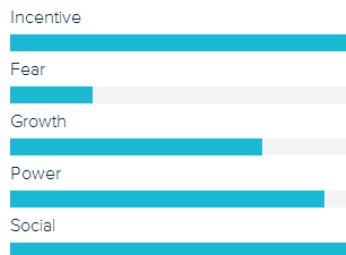
Mentoring Experiences

I currently have three mentees and several unofficial mentees and it is so gratifying to connect people to resources. I always learn something from the students too! Therefore the incentives to be a mentor are more intrinsic than outward. I truly enjoy building a stronger community and network within Georgia Tech and beyond.

Frustrations

- If you make finding a mentor too easy, then there's a lower commitment level. You'll value it more if you worked harder to get it.
- Why would I download your new app if I already have LinkedIn? Such a hassle to learn how to use new technology even though LinkedIn isn't 100% all inclusive.

Motivation



Work Experience

Georgia Tech Alumni Association
Vice President

Phoenix Career Services
Consultant

University of South Florida
HR Generalist

Rider University
Assistant Director, Alumni Relations



Sarah "Natural-Netwoker" Liu

Xtensio



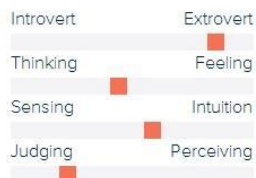
"Mentors make a living by what they get, but they make a life by what they give."

Age: 21

Year: 3rd year, ISyE major

Hometown: Alpharetta, GA

Personality



Team Player

Engineer

Volunteer

Public Speaker

Mentee

Outreach

About Sarah

I am a junior at Georgia Tech studying Industrial & Systems Engineering. I am a leader in multiple student organizations and we have some amazing students and alumni at this school. I am passionate about connecting mentors to mentees to help each other make the best Georgia Tech experience during student life and beyond!

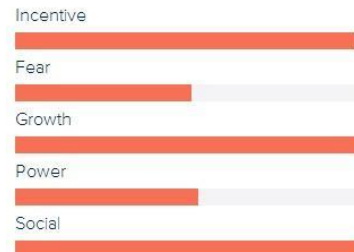
Mentoring Experiences

Through the Student Alumni Association (SAA), I've been introduced to two mentors. One of them works at IBM and the other one is getting her MBA at Harvard. I meet with them through Skype each month for about 1 to 1.5 hours. I appreciate a mentor who shares the same interests as me, can have a good conversation, and I hope to give them useful advice too. I seek for mentoring because I want to get adjusted to the real world and learn from others experiences. They've helped me adjust to college life and given me advice for Senior Design (already)! I

Frustrations

- Although I get so much information from my mentors, I still don't know what I want to do with my life!
- It's hard to tell if you're going to like your mentor based on their online profile. There's a big difference between reading about someone's accomplishment online and speaking with them in person.

Motivation



Work & Leadership Experience

Alpha Kappa Psi Business Fraternity
Alumni Correspondence Director and
Marketing Director

Georgia Tech Student Foundation
Development Committee Member

Student Alumni Association
Committee Member of Commencement
Initiatives and Ramblin On and Marketing
Committee

Society of Women Engineers
Little SWE Outreach Volunteer

Turner Broadcasting System, Inc.
Business Analyst Intern

GE Energy Connections
Quality EID Intern

Alejandra "A/e" Gallardo

Xtensio



International Student

Mexican

Eager Learner

Public Speaker

Seeking Mentorship

Easy Going

Motivation

Incentive

Fear

Growth

Power

Social

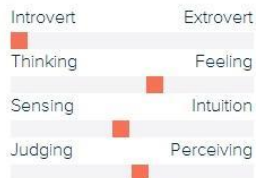
"It's okay to be scared. Being scared means you're about to do something really, really brave."

Age: 21

Year: 3rd year, ISyE major

Hometown: Mexico City, Mexico

Personality



About Ale

I am an international student from Mexico City, Mexico and I am a 3rd year studying Industrial & Systems Engineering. I came to the U.S. for better opportunities and I am still getting adjusted to my new life here.

Mentoring Experiences

I am still not aware of all the resources here. Since I come from a place of zero opportunity, I couldn't believe people here actually wanted to help me. In Mexico, there is not a culture of reaching out for help. It's more of every man (and their family) for themselves. There are no "robotics clubs", "debate team" or advisors and mentors. That's why I'm great in informal settings, but I need to be trained how to act in the corporate culture.

Frustrations

- I'm not naturally drawn to seek mentors around me. I know it's necessary but I need some help and guidance to get started.
- Students raised in the U.S. seek resources from day one because they know how everything works. But as an international student, all I want is someone who will speak Spanish with me. So I didn't see the importance of professional and academic mentorship from day 1, and that left me feeling behind until I learned where to seek for resources to thrive here.

Work & Leadership Experience

Delta Airlines

Industrial Engineering Cp-op

Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers

Member

Society of Women Engineers

Member

Prime Consulting

Member

Starbucks

Barista

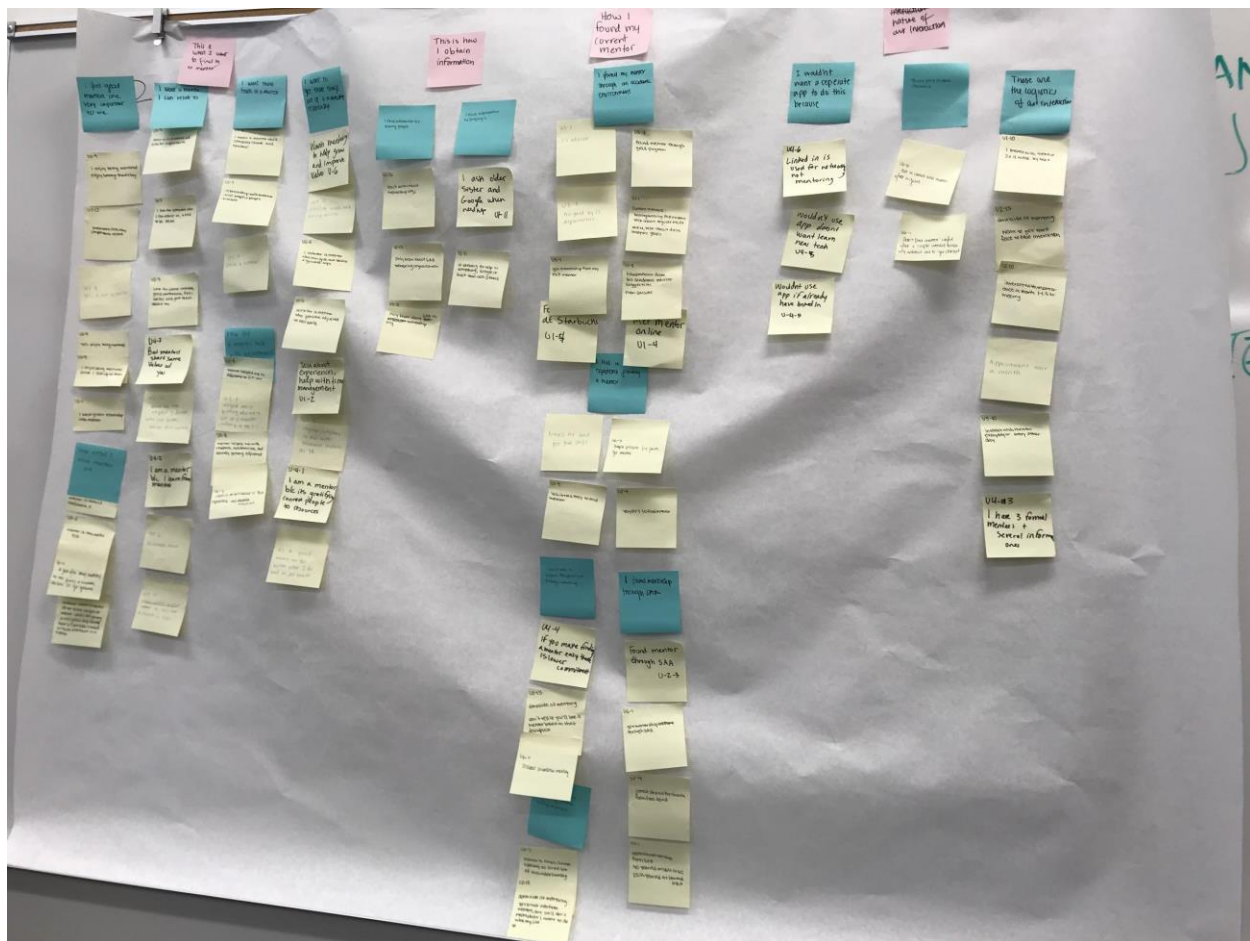
Research Implications

Through project 1 we learned about the gaps in current technology catering towards college students who are searching for mentors and the importance of mentorship to most students that we interviewed. Currently the largest obstacle for students searching for mentors is being connected to the resources which best fit their needs. While most students are aware of SAA, they don't know about other mentoring resources which might better serve their goals.

By attending SAA events we learned about current successful mentorship programs and why they work. SAA's Mentor Jackets is powerful in that it's system is quick and easy to use and it retains students because the expectation of its mentor program is that it will be a long term mentorship. The negatives of the program though are that it provides only long-term mentoring, which for many can be unhelpful because they only need a session or two with their mentor to ask questions and set goals.

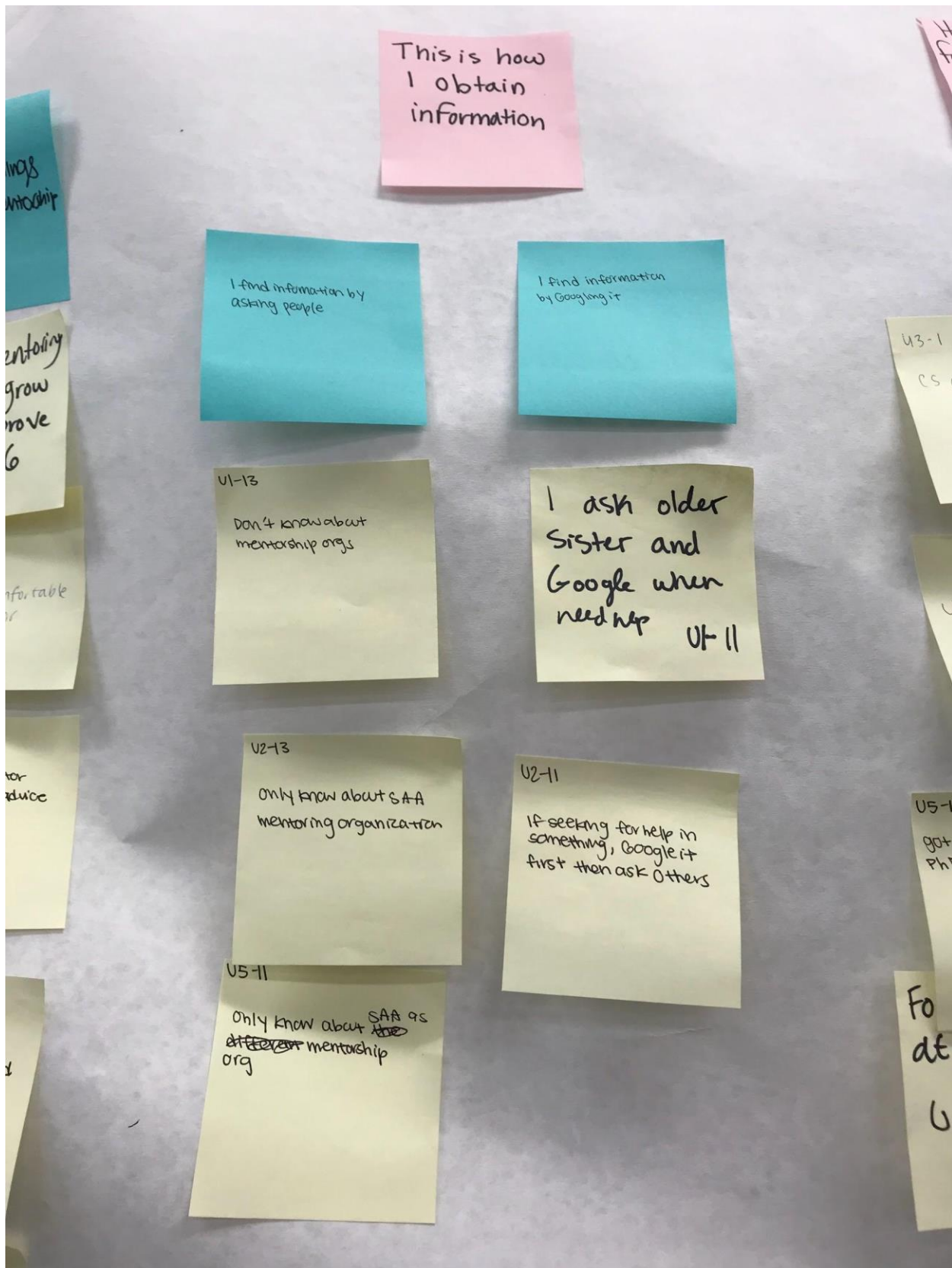
We also realized that we mainly interviewed people who have been a part of a mentorship program, mainly SAA, and that we need to complete some more user research with students who haven't found a compatible mentorship program. We also had a very small sample size of mentors themselves, so we weren't able to get opinions from mentors themselves on whether they would use a technology aimed at mentoring.

Appendix



We constructed an affinity diagram and that our analysis resulted in 16 blue groups and 4 pink groups.





How I
found my
current
mentor

I found my mentor
through an academic
environment

U3-1

CS advisor.

U5-3

found mentor through
grad program

U3-3

Assigned by CS
department.

U1-1

Current mentors:
bioengineering PhD student
talk about regular stuff
MSRM, talk about data
analytics goals

U5-1

got mentorship from my
PhD mentor

U1-3

Found mentor from
bio academic advisor
suggestion
From SACNAS

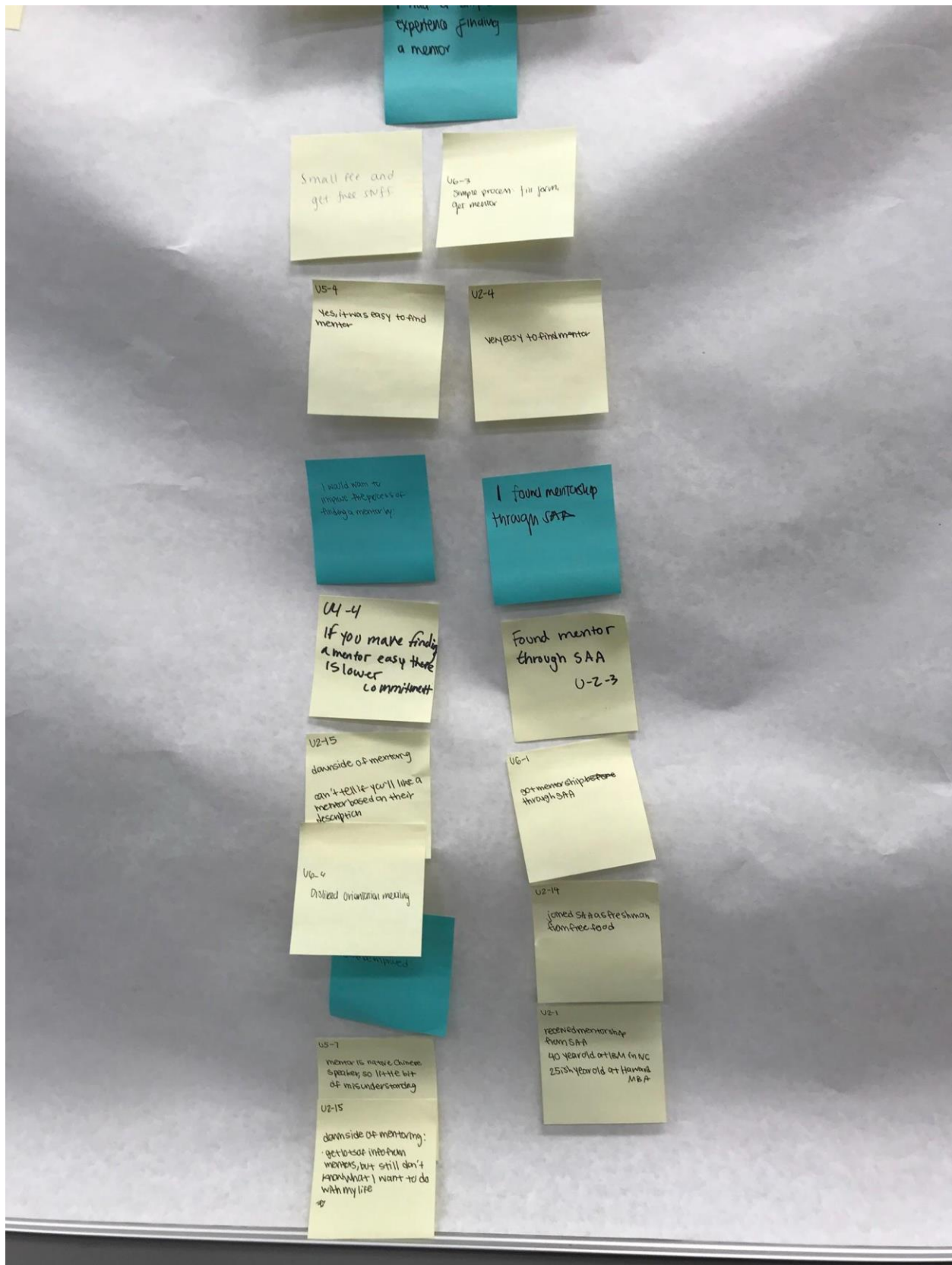
Fe
at Starbucks

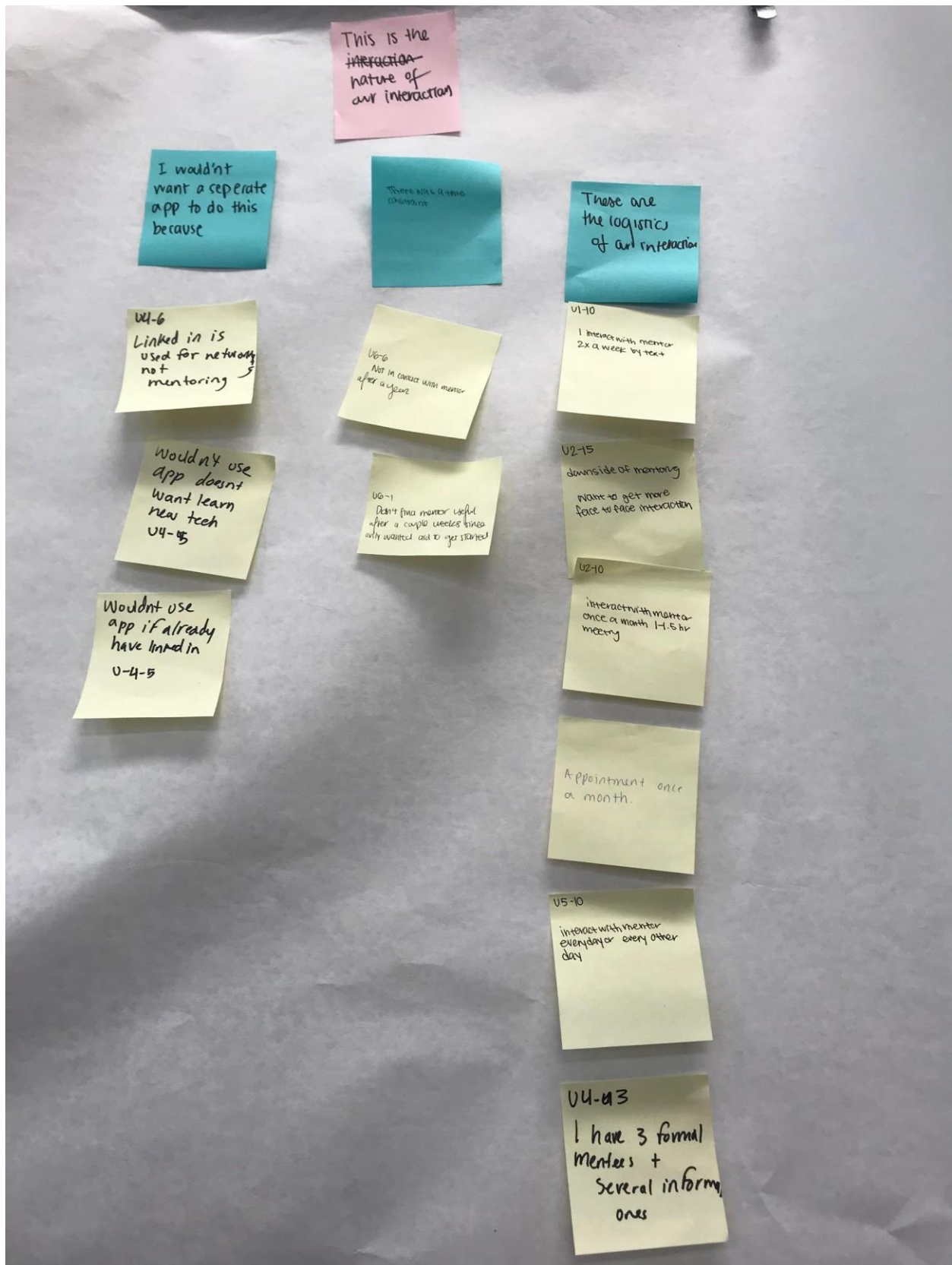
U1-4

Found mentor
online

U1-4

I had a
experience finding





User Profiles [All Fictional]

User 1 Profile
Data Source: Interview

Year: 4th
Major: Math, CS minor
Gender: Male
Demographic: Chinese
Hometown: Atlanta, GA
Clubs: TEDx [University], Math Club, Indian Club, SAA

User 2 Profile
Data Source: Interview

Year: 3rd
Major: IE
Gender: Female
Demographic: Asian
Hometown: Alpharetta, GA
Clubs: SAA, AKPsi

User 3 Profile
Data Source: Interview

Year: 3rd
Major: CS
Gender: Male
Demographic: Malaysian
Home country: Malaysia
Clubs: little involvement with SAA

User 4 Profile
Data Source: Interview

Gender: Male
Demographic: Caucasian
Hometown: Johns Creek, GA
Clubs: VP of [University] Alumni Association; Has been in career development for 20 years in GT

User 5 Profile
Data Source: Interview

Year: PhD
Major: CEE
Gender: Male
Demographic: Caucasian
Hometown: Iowa
Clubs: little involvement with SAA

User 6 Profile
Data Source: Interview

Year: 2nd
Major: CS
Gender: Male
Demographic: Caucasian
Hometown: Bethel, Washington
Clubs: little involvement with SAA

User 7 Profile
Data Source: Interview

Year: 2nd
Major: CS
Gender: Male
Demographic: Indian
Hometown: California
Clubs: Create X, AI Club, Big Data club

User 8 Profile
Data Source: Interview

Year: 2nd
Major: CS
Gender: Male
Demographic: Indian
Hometown: New York
Clubs: Create X, AI Club, Big Data club

STEM Day for Girls, 2013



APPENDIX G: LORI'S WRITING ARTIFACTS

95

Name: ()

Section Number: 7

Pattern A: Bald eagle populations declined following the common use of the pesticide DDT, but have recovered since it was banned in the United States and Canada.

Hypothesis 1: The mean number of bald eagle young per breeding area declined in the years immediately preceding the ban, possibly due to DDT.

Prediction 1: The mean number of bald eagle young per breeding area declined in the years immediately preceding the ban.

Reasoning: DDT inhibits the calcification process making for weaker shells and fewer surviving young.

Analytical Approach: scatterplot, regression

Independent Variable: Time

Dependent Variable: Mean number of bald eagle young per breeding area

Hypothesis 2: The mean number of bald eagle young per breeding area increased in the years immediately following the DDT ban, due to the absence of DDT.

Prediction 2: The mean number of bald eagle young per breeding area increased in the years immediately following the DDT ban.

Reasoning: The absence of DDT will lead to stronger shells and more bald eagle young.

Analytical Approach: scatterplot, regression

Independent Variable: Time

Dependent Variable: Mean number of bald eagle young per breeding area

Hypothesis 3: The concentrations of DDE residue in bald eagle eggs declined in the years immediately following the DDT ban, due to the absence of DDT.

Prediction 3: The concentrations of DDE in bald eagle eggs declined in the years immediately following the DDT ban.

Reasoning: DDE is a product of DDT that can persist in eggs. The DDT ban will lead to a decline in DDE.

Analytical Approach: bar graph, t-test

Independent Variable: Time (pre or post DDT ban)

Dependent Variable: Weight of DDE residue in bald eagle eggs

Hypothesis 4: Mean five-year production will decrease with increasing DDE residue in eggs due to egg thinning from DDE.

Prediction 3: Lower concentrations of DDE residue in bald eagle eggs will have higher five-year production.

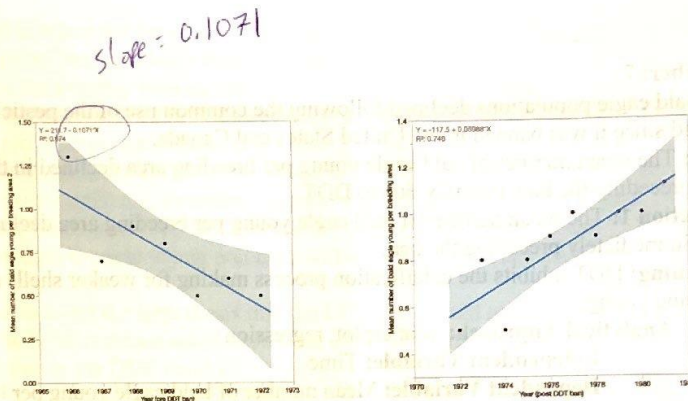
Reasoning: Mean five-year production is a measure of actual young hatched over a five-year period (to control for annual variation due to weather, etc.). The higher concentrations of DDE would likely yield thinner eggs and reduce actual production.

Analytical Approach: bar graph, ANOVA

Independent Variable: DDE Residual Intervals

Dependent Variable: mean five-year production

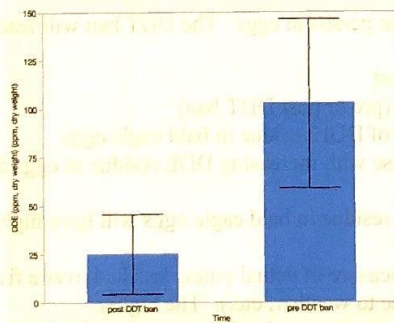
Results Regressions



- Interpret your results and report the statistics from bald eagle young per breeding area using the following as an example.
 - There was a significant decline in mean number of young per breeding area between 1966 and 1972 ($F_{1,6}=10.32$, $p=0.02$, $R^2=0.67$, $y=211.7 - 0.1071x$, Figure 1).
- Interpret your results and report statistics from the post DDT ban (Table 2) using the example above.
 - There was a significant decline in mean number of young per breeding area between 1972 and 1981 ($F_{1,9}=23.7690$, $p=0.0012$, $R^2=0.748182$, $y=-117.4984 - 0.0598788x$, Figure 2).
- Interpret the slope *only if the relationship is significant*. Between 1966 and 1972, the mean number of young per breeding area declined by ~~237.02~~ 0.1071 annually.

T-test

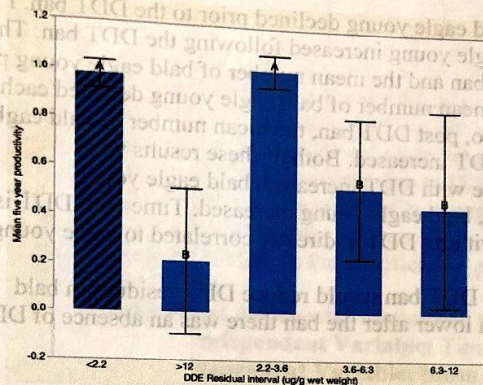
- Insert bar graph of DDE concentrations pre and post DDT ban.



- Interpret your results and report the statistics from the DDE data using the following example.
 - DDE concentrations in bald eagles were significantly reduced in the years immediately following the DDT ban ($t_6 = 5.10$, $p = 0.002$).

ANOVA

- Insert your bar graph of mean five-year production and DDE intervals.



- Interpret your results and report the statistics from those data using the following example.
 - Mean five year productivity differed among the DDE residual intervals ($F_{4,20} = 24.09$, $p < 0.0001$, Figure 4).
- Add the results of the *post hoc* Tukey tests.
 - Mean five-year production was significantly higher in the <2.2 and 2.2-3.6 µg/g wet weight than the other groups ($p < 0.05$). There was no difference among the remaining groups ($p \geq 0.05$).

Discussion – to be written in paragraphs, not bullets.

Paragraph 1

- Did you reject/fail to reject the hypothesis that bald eagle young declined prior to the DDT ban? Did you reject/fail to reject the hypothesis that bald eagle young increased following the DDT ban?
- Does there appear to be a relationship between the DDT ban and the mean number of bald eagle young per breeding area?

Paragraph 2

- Did you reject/fail to reject the hypothesis that the DDT ban would reduce DDE residues in bald eagle eggs?
- Why might DDE residues be lower after the ban?

Paragraph 3

- Did you reject/fail to reject the hypothesis that means five-year production would increase with decreasing DDE residue?
- Use the information from paragraphs 1 and 2 to explain the increase in young bald eagles since 1972. Which DDE concentrations allow for higher young production?

Note: The discussion section above is for this homework assignment only. It is a decent general guide for lab reports, but you will need to go into much greater detail in your actual reports.

Follow Chapter 3 for instructions on writing actual reports.

I failed to reject the hypothesis that bald eagle young declined prior to the DDT ban. I also failed to reject the hypothesis that bald eagle young increased following the DDT ban. There appears to be a relationship between the DDT ban and the mean number of bald eagle young per breeding area because with DDT present, the mean number of bald eagle young declined each year as DDT presence continued annually. Also, post DDT ban, the mean number of bald eagle young increased as amount of time without DDT increased. Both of these results were somewhat linearly correlated; therefore, as time with DDT increased, bald eagle young decreased, and as time without DDT increased, bald eagle young increased. Time with DDT is inversely correlated to eagle young and time without DDT is directly correlated to eagle young.

I failed to reject the hypothesis that the DDT ban would reduce DDE residues in bald eagle eggs. The DDE residues could have been lower after the ban there was an absence of DDT to continue to create the DDE residue.

I failed to reject the hypothesis that means five-year production would increase with decreasing DDE residues. The two lowest DDE Residual intervals (<2.2 and $2.2-3.6$) correlated with the two significantly higher means of five-year productivity. There was an increase in bald eagle young post DDT ban, because there was no DDT to inhibit calcification of the shells, and therefore, create weaker shells. In addition, because DDT banned, levels of DDE decreased. When the mean level of productivity was observed at the lowest residues, there was a significantly higher five-year productivity than when the DDE remained. Post DDT ban, the mean bald eagle young increased as time without the pesticide did.

APPENDIX H: PAIGE'S WRITING ARTIFACTS

Concussion is a rising health concern in the world of sports as well as everyday life. Concussion has been defined in many ways over the years, but the most recent definition refers to a blow to the head or neck, that results in the rapid onset of short-lived neurological impairments (halstead). In the United States, there is an estimated incidence of 503 concussions per 100,000 people (majerske). Overall, there are approximately 300,000 concussions every year in the United States (majerske). Between 1997 and 2007, concussion incidence in adolescents increased 200% (moser), now serving as the most common sports injury in children and adolescents (strelzik) making up 8.9% of all high school athletic injuries (halstead). The most common concussions reported are in children and adolescents, specifically those playing contact sports with football players sustaining the most concussions.

Concussions are a growing topic of importance in our culture today, in diagnosis, prevention, and recovery. While patients often exhibit signs of concussion, some of the symptoms clinicians look for when diagnosing concussion include but are not limited to: headache, nausea, balance problems, dizziness, fatigue, sleep issues, drowsiness, irritability, sensitivity to light and/or noise, increased emotions, and feeling slowed down (majerske). Concussion recovery time can vary in length, though symptoms are typically expected to subside in 7-10 days post-injury (leddy) and should be fully resolved in adolescents within 3 weeks due to their longer recovery time overall (Moser).

Concussion Assessment

Comment [1]: Not a bad start with all that you've been working on-- it still needs a lot of work. I recognize that scientific writing is a skill that constantly needs development over time. With that said, some advice I can offer to help with your revisions is to go line by line and ask yourself, "Is this sentence as clear as it can be?" Am I getting the overall point across? We will need a couple rounds of revisions before submitting as your final grade, but this should help point you in the right direction!

Comment [2]: I would point out that the concussion definition is still unclear ... [1]

Deleted: sport-related or not,

Comment [3]: Make sure to include the definition from the 5th international ... [2]

Comment [4]: Remind me to show you how to insert references directly from ... [3]

Moved (insertion) [1]

Comment [5]: Did you come across any information on collegiate athletes as ... [4]

Comment [6]: Is this true? With statements like this, a reference is needed ... [5]

Comment [7]: See if you can find information on primary mechanisms ... [6]

Moved up [1]: In the United States, there is an estimated incidence of 503 ... [7]

Deleted: That said,

Deleted: c

Comment [8]: Such as?

Deleted: experience

Comment [9]: No longer true -- just think about the participants in our study ... [8]

Comment [10]: Include titles for each section in order to make it clear on what ... [9]

Assessments are completed immediately on the field to determine eligibility and safety to continue playing. Multiple sideline tools are used to determine the existence of a concussion including the Balance Error Scoring System (BESS), a physical test of balance on firm and foam ground, the Standardized Assessment of Concussion (SAC), a battery of several various short tests for mind strength and memory, and the Sport Concussion Assessment Tool Version 5 (SCAT4), a test of symptom severity (halstead). If a concussion is suspected...

A step-wise return to activity (or play in athletes) should be implemented when determining an individual's readiness for the re-introduction of physical activity. A gradual return-to-play progression consists of six stages: 1. No activities that provoke symptoms. 2. Light aerobic exercise of walking or cycling at a slow to medium pace. 3. Sport-specific exercise of running drills without any head impact activities. 4. Non-contact training drills that include resistance training and harder training drills. 5. Full contact practice with medical clearance to allow normal training activities. 6. Fully able to return to sport and participate in normal game play (mccrory). A participant should spend no less than a day in each stage, thus making the entire return to play process last one week minimum (mccrory). Though this progression explains when to return to play, it does not fully address when an individual becomes fully asymptomatic. For athletes, asymptomatic is when their cognitive function has returned back to baseline (halstead).

Concussion Recovery Components

11/19/2017 2:04 PM
Deleted: So how do you know if you have a concussion? For athletes,

11/19/2017 2:21 PM
Deleted: a

11/19/2017 2:21 PM
Deleted: There are various

11/19/2017 2:22 PM
Deleted: , more commonly used are

11/19/2017 1:58 PM
Comment [11]: This should be SCAT5 (named after the 5th international consensus meeting in Berlin, Germany).

11/19/2017 1:59 PM
Deleted: 4

11/19/2017 2:22 PM
Deleted: at the given time

11/19/2017 2:23 PM
Comment [12]: I would include information on what we do if a concussion is suspected. Do we remove them from play? This information can be found in the 5th international consensus statement

11/19/2017 2:28 PM
Comment [13]: After this paragraph, I would include a separate paragraph on each tool separately: SCAT5, neurocognition (i.e. ImPACT), and balance. It just gives us an idea on what information is gained from each test. For example, neurocognition is commonly assessed using computerized neurocognitive tests such as ImPACT, which examines verbal and visual memory, reaction time, etc. Just think of the tests that we administer to our participants. The idea is to explain what the tests to someone who has never been exposed to concussion testing.

11/19/2017 2:23 PM
Deleted: After

11/19/2017 2:23 PM
Deleted: these tests are completed, an assessment of other potential confounding factors is conducted. Any history of attention deficit disorder, general learning disa... [10]

11/19/2017 2:50 PM
Comment [14]: I'm a little confused with this statement. A return-to-pla... [11]

11/19/2017 2:53 PM
Comment [15]: Think about other areas of our concussion testing in th... [12]

11/19/2017 3:12 PM
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APPENDIX I: DUAL ENROLLMENT STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

University English 101

Rental Textbooks: *Little, Brown Handbook* (Pearson, Southeastern Custom Ed.) and *Word and Image*
Course materials: <http://moodlede>

ENGL 101 is a hybrid course with all content delivered online through MoodleDE and My Writing Lab OR face-to-face by the faculty. The instructor of record will develop course content and provide powerpoint notes, ungraded instructional assignments, ungraded quizzes that are similar to exams, and exam study guides to help prepare students to complete the graded assignments and the exams which are also provided by the instructor of record. The high school teachers will act as a facilitator and assist with student registration and enrollment, proctor exams as necessary, and through supplemental instruction, serve as a daily learning resource for students as they assimilate course content. The students' final course grades are assigned by the instructor of record.

Additional Third Party Software: My Writing Lab for Composition is a program provided by Pearson, our textbook publisher, to assist you in the writing process by making resources available online. A tutoring service is also provided by My Writing Lab for Composition. During the instructor's first visit to the high school, students will be given an access code to enroll in My Writing Lab for Composition. An electronic version of the handbook is available on this site.

Student Learning Objectives:

1. Develop and use a writing process that includes drafting and revising written work.
2. Improve critical thinking skills in both reading and writing.
3. Understand the styles of different types of formal essays in order to make strategic stylistic choices in your own writing.
4. Work in a variety of situations, including collaborations, peer review workshops, independent analysis, and large group discussions.
5. Acquire and solidify knowledge of sentence and paragraph structures, grammar, and syntax.
6. Above all, develop confidence in your own ability as a writer and learn to incorporate your own voice into your writing to make it uniquely your own.

Essays There will be five 100-point essays including a final exam essay. Essays assignments will be posted in Moodle DE and discussed in face-to-face class visits. Students will submit essays for grades and feedback via MoodleDE and grades will be posted on MoodleDE. There will be 500 total points from essays.

Quizzes: Students will complete three quizzes in Moodle DE site. The quizzes are open book, so students may use textbooks, notes, and handouts to complete each quiz. Quizzes are 5 points each for a total of 15 points and can be taken more than once to earn the maximum points.

Make Up Work and Late Papers: If a student has a legitimate excuse (death in family and severe illness), the student will be allowed to make up the assignment without penalty, but the facilitator should inform the Instructor of Record, with the details of the situation. Unexcused papers that are three or more days late will lose a minimum of five points; however, papers that are more than two weeks late without an excuse will not be graded and will receive a zero.

Grade scale: [90-100% = A] [80-89% = B] [70-79% = C] [60-69% = D] [< 60% = F]

Grades will be posted on MoodleDE at the completion of the unit. The Instructor of record will report final grades in LeoNet.

Academic Dishonesty: Schools agree that the first incident of academic dishonesty in any course by any student in any manner will result in a grade of 0 on the assessment in question. The second incident will result in the student's failing the portion of the course. Academic Dishonesty Policy:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. Behavior that violates these standards is not acceptable. Examples are the use of unauthorized material, communication with fellow students during an examination, attempting to benefit from the work of another student and similar behavior that defeats the intent of an examination or other class work. Cheating on examinations, plagiarism, improper acknowledgement of sources in essays, and the use of a single essay or paper in more than one course without permission are considered very serious offenses and shall be grounds for disciplinary action as outlined in the current General Catalogue of Louisiana University]

OUTCOME ASSESSMENT REPORTING SUMMARY BY COURSE

COURSE: ENGL 1001- Spring 2017 **INSTRUCTOR:** _____

Meets the [University] General Education requirement for composition.

I. COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Goal: Upon successful completion of this course, the student will

1. Write an essay of at least five paragraphs that has a well-defined thesis statement, is well-organized and well-developed, uses sound critical thinking skills, and is clear.
2. Develop clear topic sentences that include the main idea of the paragraph.
3. Develop paragraph bodies with substantial support: evidence, details, and facts.
4. Use proper grammar, punctuation, mechanics, and usage throughout their writing.

II. IMPLEMENTATION: How will you meet these outcomes in the course delivery?

1. Semester-long review of essay modes and practice in writing/revising each mode.
2. Semester-long review of essay modes and practice in writing/revising each mode.
3. Semester-long review of essay modes and practice in writing/revising each mode
4. Grammar, punctuation, mechanics, and usage review, correction of errors on each essay, and practice and revision.

III. How will you assess that the outcomes have been achieved?

1. Major Learning Outcome #1 is assessed using a Final Exam essay. Instructors evaluate the essay's thesis, organization, development, demonstration of critical thinking skills, and clarity.
- 2-4. Major Learning Outcomes #2 - #4 are assessed using a multiple-choice test concerning topic sentences; supporting evidence; and grammar, punctuation, mechanics, and usage.

IV. Data Analysis

***How many students in this section took the Final Exam?**

% of Students Successfully Completing Outcome	Outcome met?	Plan of Action
↓	70%-100% = Yes 0%-69% = No ↓	(If the Outcome was not met, what changes will you implement next semester to try and increase student success?) ↓

Outcome 1 (What percentage of those who took the Final Exam scored 70% "C" or higher on the Final Exam?)			
Outcomes 2-4 (Using students' 1001 Scantron Post Test scores)	Dr. [Name] will report these results for us in ENGL 1001.	Dr. [Name] will report these results for us in ENGL 1001.	Dr. [Name] will contact instructors for this information.

APPENDIX J: IRB APPROVAL



ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST

TO: Candence Robillard
Education

FROM: Dennis Landin
Chair, Institutional Review Board

DATE: January 5, 2018

RE: IRB# E10828

TITLE: Considering Choice and Community: Advanced College Credit and the Changing Landscape of High School

Institutional Review Board
Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair
130 David Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
P: 225.578.8692
F: 225.578.5983
irb@lsu.edu
lsu.edu/research

New Protocol/Modification/Continuation: New Protocol

Review Date: 1/4/2018

Approved X **Disapproved** _____

Approval Date: 1/4/2018 **Approval Expiration Date:** 1/3/2021

Exemption Category/Paragraph: 2b

Signed Consent Waived?: No

Re-review frequency: (three years unless otherwise stated)

LSU Proposal Number (if applicable):

Protocol Matches Scope of Work in Grant proposal: (if applicable)

By: Dennis Landin, Chairman 

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –
Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:**

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
7. Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.
8. **SPECIAL NOTE: When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc. Approvals will automatically be closed by the IRB on the expiration date unless the PI requests a continuation.**

* All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at <http://www.lsu.edu/irb>

VITA

Candence Malhiet Robillard has taught high school English for 22 years. Her involvement as an instructor in the International Baccalaureate program and in various dual enrollment partnerships sparked her interest in writing instruction beyond high school. Upon completion of her doctorate, she will continue to teach eleventh and twelfth grade students to read and write with confidence.